The Messiah's Message

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THE MESSIAH'S MESSAGE

BY

JOHN JOSEPH ROBINSON

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PREFACE

Every word that fell so sweetly from the lips of Jesus Christ was a marvelous revelation to a bewildered world, every revelation contained a sublime truth, and every truth was full of a hope or solace. Our Lord must have been the center of all eyes wherever he went, and His words must have diffused all around a soft and genial atmosphere of holiness. His conversation fell like a gentle and heavenly dew upon his hearers' hearts, rousing up in them whatever was fruitful. "The art of Apostolical conversation," says Father Coleridge, "is one of the most delicate and beautiful of the instruments which God uses for the benefit of souls, and it must have been possessed in fullness by our Lord, Who clothed all His actions, demeanor, and words with the most lovely and gracious affability. And, therefore, any attempt on the part of human language and human imagery must necessarily have been an inadequate vehicle to faithfully portray Him." Christ Himself knew what difficulties would confront us in this matter, and out of consideration for us He generally had recourse to parables to explain His divine message. These parables preached by His ministers throughout the world go straight to the hearts of men and rouse up the sleeping echoes in those who hear them willingly and

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profit by them. Yes, this beautiful character, Christ, brought a message to the world as His guest, it was a message of love and leniency. He clothed it with unparalleled beauty and graciousness, but the world was not attracted by its beauty, nay, the world, to a great extent, rejected that message, which He clearly explains in the parable of the wedding feast of the king's son. That message contained in His Gospel, is the message of truth, and, therefore, is hated by the world because the world does not wish to hear the truth. That message is abhorred by the world because it calls the world an impostor. The world wars against this message because it commands us to practice self-denial and not allow the three concupiscences to drag us into the slough of the world. Notwithstanding this hatred and bitterness against it, from the day that the divine Messenger Himself suffered death on its behalf on Calvary, from that sad afternoon when the crimson fountain first burst forth on Golgotha, the same purple stream will continue its course to the end of time, for the heroic messengers of that message will continue to bear it to a sinful and warring world laying down their lives in its defense.

We often hear it said that there is nothing original. I may say that this applies to the present work, " The Messiah's Message." However, sometimes a face looks different, apparently so, according to the hat that one may wear; in other words, the same ideas can be expressed in different language, and their expression looks the more pleasing according to the language in which they are expressed. A bad fitting coat makes

a man look slovenly, while a suitable fitting one makes him look smarter and more attractive. I hope that I don't arrogate too much to myself, when I claim to have placed part of the MESSIAH'S MESSAGE in a mold that brings out more clearly some of the beauties of Christian teaching.

In the compilation of this book I owe much to many authors whose words I could not improve on, and hence I quoted them without alteration. Some passages I transposed in order to render the doctrine more easily understood. This has been done by many writers. St. Augustine extracted from Plato some of his loftiest ideas, and the writers of the Middle Ages interlaced some of their beautiful conceptions with those of Aristotle. With such examples before me I claim your indulgence.

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS

PAGE

"Ne Sutor Ultra Crepidam" 1
"Let not the shoemaker go beyond his last."

Man 24

Man's Object 41

Shall Our Bodies Rise After Death 54

Religious Sentiment. Part I 65

Religious Sentiment. Part II 79

Religious Sentiment. Part III 94

Christ and His Church 105

Sin and Redemption 137

Sin 153

Sin and its First Punishment 165

Punishment of Sin Continued 173

Eternal Punishment 184

Faith 197

Infidelity 212

The Unbelief of the World 221

Purgatory 231

"Peace be to You" 248

The Resurrection of the Sinner. Part I 267

The Resurrection of the Sinner. Part II 280
"I will arise and go to my father, and say to him: Father! I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee."

The Resurrection of the Sinner. Part III 291
"Pray that your flight may not be in winter."

Let Us Pray 298

PAGE

BLESSED EUCHARIST. PART I 307
BLESSED EUCHARIST. PART II 319
BLESSED EUCHARIST. PART III 326
"HAIL MARY" 336
THE RICH AND THE POOR 348

Dedication

My Dear Mr. Hayden.

Permit me to have the honor of dedicating to you this work, titled " The Messiah's Message." I hope you will find explained in it, to your satisfaction, some of those truths of Christ's Church which are severely and unjustly criticised.

I am

Yours faithfully.

J. J. ROBINSON.

THE MESSIAH'S MESSAGE

"NE SUTOR ULTRA CREPIDAM"

"Let not the shoemaker go beyond his last."

There are many who tell us to-day that science holds the key which opens the door of the treasury of all truth, that it is the source of light and truth of all questions of any importance, that it can explain all phenomena. These are wild words, they are seductive promises. Every attempt to advance our knowledge of the unknown, to solve problems connected with humanity, to enrich the stores of truth, is a most commendable employment, and in keeping with the dignity and destiny of the human race. It is wise to encourage the pursuit of science, and to expect from it progressive discovery and enlightenment. The prodigious success of our scientific acquirements during the past few years, almost forces us on our knees to worship her as a fair goddess. The Augustan era of old appears to be resuscitated in the twentieth century. The living forces of nature set to work by human genius have altered the face of the earth. By means of the compass, the telescope, and other inventions of men, the ethereal distances have been extended extensively, and peopled by vast worlds, the weight, the

number, the volume of which are laid down with marvelous accuracy in scientific records. Science pierces the crust of the earth and discovers for us the dreadful upheavals that have taken place in ages gone by, it brings to view the fossils of extinct species from a mysterious unrecorded history which has been accumulating through millions of years. Through the impressions of the silurian rocks we are introduced to the inhabitants of the primitive world. Science harnesses that most dangerous element, electricity, to suit human needs. By its application space is almost annihilated, and her wingless voice through wireless telegraphy reaches the sinking mariner crying to the shore for help. By her meteorology she forecasts storms and forewarns us of their approach. I may say every law discovered in the order of nature is applied as an invention in the industrial system to ameliorate the condition of human life. We must gratefully acknowledge this progress since its object is to confer the greatest possible benefits on humanity. And we may never dread that the revelations of natural science will ever contradict the revelations of Eternal Truth, but on the contrary they will assist in a great measure in persuading vacillating minds that both proceed from the same divine origin. So long as man's mind does not become the dupe of the senses scientific inquiry cannot proceed too far. "Science," says Dr. M'Cosh, "has a foundation, and so has religion. Let them unite their foundations, and the basis will be broader and they will be two compartments of one great fabric reared to the glory of God.

Let one be the outer and the other the inner court. In the one let all look, and admire, and adore; and in the other let those who have faith kneel, and pray, and praise. Let the one be the sanctuary where human learning may present its richest incense as an offering to God, and the other, the holiest of all, separated from it by a veil now rent in twain, and in which, on a blood-sprinkled mercy-seat, we pour out the love of a reconciled heart, and hear the offerings of the living God."

Filled with justifiable pride in her discoveries science aspired to higher flights, it hoped to unlock the door of the spiritual and moral world with the key of the material world and introduce us to all within its walls. This is her fundamental mistake, because science derives its knowledge from inference, from experiment; now experiment cannot show, for example, the difference between the soul and body, for this knowledge is arrived at from the observance of their phenomena which is the duty of philosophy; it draws conclusions from the elements supplied by science. From the science of chemistry we learn that man is made up of a certain amount of carbon, nitrogen, chalk, and hydrogen. From the science of biology we learn that man is made up of a number of cells. From the science of zoölogy we trace man's genealogical descent. These studies are within the province of science, but it must halt here. When science steps outside this boundary she becomes a wanderer without a light, she commences to grope, she ceases to walk upright, she is in the land of a stranger, she is

trespassing. Hence when scientists talk about the soul they apply the results of their observations from the sensible world. They are like rude carpenters who use a trowel where they should use an ax, they work with the wrong tools. For example, they experiment on the brain with instruments and then determine the nature of the faculties of the soul. Here lies the blunder; a miscroscope or scalpel is a poor instrument to build up for us the knowledge of the soul; this knowledge is acquired by the soul reacting upon itself. Don't ask science what is the soul, or anything about the soul, because it can't answer you truthfully, no doubt it will essay a reply, for we know pride will always give some answer through fear of being convicted of ignorance. Let science keep within the domain of matter which it dissects and analyzes; when, therefore, it trumpets that thought, sentiment, intellectual ideas are nothing more than the movements or vibrations of molecules; it is proclaiming things completely outside its radius. When it bawls aloud that we must not admit anything except what comes under the observance of the senses, it is a deceiver. When it can't give us a prescription from its laboratory to heal the wounds of our infirmities, to save us from our fellow-man's selfishness, to calm our fears of death, but robs us of a God who can do so, it is a persecutor. Therefore when science has no *imprimatur* that authorizes it to speak of the soul we must conclude that what it proposes about the soul's faculties is so much rambling rot; as the soul is invisible, science cannot

demonstrate anything about it, and it must always remain for it an insoluble problem.

We must not, therefore, be surprised to hear science say through Renan, "that God is a pious old word, a little misty, which means a very subtle interpretation," and "that a man must descend very low in the scale of intelligence in order to discover that the world has any other cause than itself." We must not, therefore, be surprised to hear the atheistic philosophers say, "the universe accounts for its own existence by primordial matter, necessary and eternal, the evolutions of which have produced the world." It is no wonder that men who, relying for science to teach us everything, say "that beyond the realm of chemical elements and their combinations absolutely nothing exists." With regard to God science supplies some of the elements of philosophical demonstration, but God being a pure spirit is beyond the reach of experiment. The existence of God, therefore, cannot be proved by scientific demonstration. From a metaphysical point of view creation is very difficult to prove, human reason unassisted has no conception of it. Epicurus and the Stoics professed the eternity of matter, and the order of the world they attributed to blind chance. The Eleates taught that the world was a part of God. This wrangle about creation proves that great difficulties arose which prevented the mind from grasping the idea of a creator. This was the perturbed state of the minds of the philosophers of old, and this strange perturbation torments society to-day, and ends

by generating chaos in our ideas, manners, and customs, for the greatest part of the history of the world, of its revolutions, of its errors and conquests is nothing but a war against religion. Unroll the chronicles of the world and you will hear a voice denying, at every page, this great truth — the existence of God. Science no longer wishes to recognize the existence of a Deity, nay more, with a brazen front it dares to say that the belief in a God acts like a brake on the chariot of enlightenment. Literature does not permit it to encroach on its precincts. Poesy insults it. History labors to efface the name of God from its pages. From the schoolroom, from the hospital, from the domestic hearth the cross is removed that memory might suffer the symbol of the Crucified to become a thing of the past and forgotten. Thus does atheism without shame stand forth in the light of noonday splendor denuded of all argument, not even a shred, and with wanton effrontery endeavors to corrupt and rob humanity of its inherent purity of belief in God. It is this false teaching that is crushing and desolating the heart of man. "There is no such thing as God," this is the cry we hear to-day wafted on the wings of so-called science and echoed back by the world. "There is no such thing as God," shriek the licentious, "who was ever known to have returned from the grave. Like the track of a cloud our lives vanish, they shall be dispersed like a mist driven away before the beams of the sun. Come, therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are present. Let us hasten to enjoy them lest the flower of the time escape us.

Crown us with roses ere they be withered. Let no meadow escape our riot, let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die. Free the rein to desire, let every passion have its fill, everywhere leave we tokens of how we have enjoyed our fleeting hour. Let the sounds of mirth and revelry never be silent within our halls. The only elysium is the sty of our passions." These are the outpourings of a delirium in humanity contracted by the intemperate and diseased teachings of men, more suited to the ravings of a maniac than any other.

Every nation under the sun adored some kind of a deity. Whether it was Unity in India, Dualism in Persia, Variety in Greece, or Plurality in Rome, still a god was worshiped whether he thundered in Jupiter or lay besotted in Bacchus. Man believes in God instinctively. The whole human race adored a God. Herodotus treating of nations points out their religions. Plato proves the existence of God by the unanimous consent of the Greeks and barbarians. Aristotle affirms "that all men have an idea of God, and this notion has existed among them from the remotest antiquity." "What nation," says Cicero, "or what race of men has not (even without any previous teaching) a certain anticipated knowledge of the gods?" Seneca says, "There is no nation so rude as not to believe in the gods." The belief in God may have been eclipsed among certain nations, but it always rises again from its ashes. Tribes there might have been discovered destitute not only of the elegancies but of the most necessary arts of humanized

existence, ignorant of letters and laws, without ideas of property or of fixed habitations, but no tribe or people, however barbarous, has ever been discovered without a belief in God. From the Scythian hunter wrapped in ermine and roaming in the icy north to the vulgarized Australian aboriginal there is a universal belief in a deity. We find it with the Indian in his wattled wigwam, with the Zulu in his kraal, with the Chinaman in his pagoda. This universal belief is an undeniable fact, and to explain this fact a proportioned cause accompanies it. It can't be explained away as an effect of prejudices or passion, for they are diversified and vary; nor of ignorance because such belief imports knowledge of a first cause; nor of fear because it would die out by the experience of its emptiness; nor of superstition because superstition would confirm our thesis. This constant fact, therefore, of belief in God cannot be explained except by it being inherent in our human nature; it comes from our intelligent soul.

The wise philosophers of old give us also their own personal expressions of their belief in an all-ruling power. Aristotle says, "When a man came to explain the existence of an Intelligence which, in nature, as well as in animated beings, is the cause of the order and regularity that appear throughout the whole world he left the impression of being the only one possessed of his senses, and having remained sober, so to speak, after the extraordinary follies of his predecessors." Plato writes in his Republic, "Man ought to rise from the view of contingent objects and

elevate his whole soul to the luminous contemplation of the Being who is." Cicero never doubted final causes. "When we consider," he says, "the continuous and fixed movements, the causes, together with the revolutions of the heavenly spheres which are so numerous and gigantic we must acknowledge that all these bodies are guided by a superior intellect. Since, therefore, neither the mind nor the power of man can produce results, God alone must be the Architect of all these worlds, and the Director of their movements. The beauty of the world, the harmony of the spheres, show at first sight that this is not the work of chance, and force us to acknowledge that there exists above us a nature superior, eternal, and worthy of the admiration of the human race." Horace, a great genius, writes, "It is God, who, through the order of the seasons, makes harmony to reign over the sea, the land, and the whole universe. It is from Him that all things have sprung, and not one can be compared to Him." The expression of these great philosophers of old have great force when we come to consider that they were surrounded by a pagan world of pagan thought, and their loftiness of mind had to soar to a high altitude so as not to be clogged by the influence of pagan creeds. From this standpoint their sayings are a proof that their conclusions of the existence of a God were the result of vigorous reasoning.

Among modern philosophers we have very strong revelations in their writings of their belief in God. Voltaire, condemning Lucretius, who denied final causes, said, "In matters of philosophy Lucretius

knows a little less than a church beadle." "I feel within myself," said La Bruyère, "that there is a God, and I do not feel his non-existence." Napoleon I used to say, "It is not everyone who wants that can make himself an atheist." M. Taine explains everything by declaring that "at the summit of all things there is an Eternal axiom, of which the prolonged reverberations compose, by their inexhaustible undulations, the immensity of the universe — an immortal and creative formula, omnipotent and eternal, which nothing can exhaust." Nations like the United States of America when proclaiming their new government make worship of God the foundation stone of the constitution. Now a religious fact that is continually reproducing itself in the history of the human race must be part of human nature and be, and is, engrafted in it by the great Creator of the human soul. Fénelon in his treatise on the existence of God supposes himself to have been taken to a desert island, where he discovers a statue, and exclaims, "There must have been men here before. I recognize here the hand of a talented sculptor. I admire the nicety with which he has proportioned all the parts of this body, so as to give it so much beauty, grace, majesty, and life." This kind of reasoning ran in the mind of Voltaire when he wrote these words: "If a clock proves the existence of a clockmaker, and the world does not prove the existence of a Supreme Architect, I consent to be called Cause finalier, that is to say a fool." Newton, after having explained the laws of light, asked himself the question, whether the eye

could have been made by one who was without any knowledge of optics, and the ear by one without knowledge of the laws of sound. "You conclude," said he, "that I possess an intelligent soul, because you perceive a certain order in my words and thoughts. Judge, then, when you set the order and regularity existing in the world, that a being sovereignly intelligent must exist."

The proof of finality of the existence of God is unanswerable. The general organization of the matter which composes the world demonstrates the existence of a first cause. Look at the pageantry of the sidereal world. How can this work be explained without the intervention of a Superior Intelligence. Without a directing mind, it would be impossible to account for those gigantic and impassable worlds. World after world follow and encircle each other in a regular network of orbits and movements, and these movements are so accurately regulated upon that immense spindle in the midst of space that we are forced to pause and commune with Him Who fixed their laws. "The force is so gentle that guides them that they seem to us like lamps balanced in the sky." The distances between them are immeasurable. When we think of them we shrink back appalled. We stare hopelessly out at stars so remote that the light which can travel ninety-six millions of miles to the sun in eight minutes, takes hours, days, years to arrive to them. And far beyond these stars again a million others spread away in swarms of tangled haze. What a contemplation for us to see these myriads of worlds

sailing noiselessly with such precision, with such measured music in their beautiful orbits. Planet balances planet and on goes the endless song. Two forces regulate these bodies, attraction is neutralized by an opposing force, and on goes the heavenly symphony. Who then could have generated these forces? Who gave these worlds their first impulse, and who keeps them still moving? In vain do we look for an explanation from insentient nature, from that unconscious germ developing and perfecting itself in the course of ages by virtue of a force latent within it. The Creator alone is the cause. Yes, this huge solar system swings and rotates in loose space by His command. The eye wanders over the starry firmament, over this many creatured world, the hands of the soul stretch out in the dark groping to feel something that will satisfy its grasp, they seize a thousand things, but they let go their hold in disappointment, and so goes on the search until they light on God, then and only then have they found their peace and the vision of their joy.

Every variety of creation tingles with God, breathes God, is pregnant with God, shines with God, is fragrant with God. From the ripple of streams and the loud resounding ocean, from the sweet-scented flowers of the meadow and the rustling leaves of the trees, from the confused hum of myriads of insects and the roar of the lion in the forest comes a solemn melody, and the musicians who contribute towards it so harmonize one with another that the concert is never jarred by a single discordant note, all with an attentive

ear and fixed eye obey their Omnipotent Director, and by their obedience disclose to us the existence of some Great Ruling Power. And this disclosure is not contradicted by science, there is no antithesis between science and revelation. When men say that science and revelation clash, the clash is only apparent, the fault is not with this or that particular branch of science, but with the mind which becomes distorted and thus puts the blame on science instead of taking it on itself. Geology, for example; no matter how deep we dig and burrow into the earth and examine those archives of nature of both organic and inorganic matter, they will not reveal anything contrary to the Mosaic narrative of creation. This is also the case with the science of astronomy. Let us soar from the earth to the moon, stars, and planets until we get lost in nebulous matter, everywhere we have God. This is the case with the laws of energy, force, motion, or rest, of sound, light and heat, they are only revelations of a Master Mind. The crystals of the mineralogical kingdom, the beautiful colors of flowers and rich foliage of trees speak of His beauty; music, like a strophe or hymn to God, sounds His harmonies. All these are disclosures of God, but He hides Himself to a certain extent behind them. He draws a thick and heavy veil around Himself, yet we see Him through the veil. There is not a tree or flower, not a gentle and timid singing bird, not a painted butterfly that does not reveal some one or other of His divine attributes. It is well to observe that every beauty of creation is a reflex of some of the divine perfections,

so that all together are a faithful translation of God's sovereign beauty; for this reason all creatures each in its own way, from the brilliant globe that illumines space to the humble lily which is forgotten in the valley, bear witness to His ineffable perfections, and sing with an endless song His excellence and His glory; "the heavens sing of His omnipotence, the seas of His greatness, the earth of His fecundity, the clouds with their lofty promontories represent the footstool upon which His feet rest; the lightning is His will; the thunder, His voice; He is in the abysses with His silence, and in the loud hurricanes and tempestuous whirlwinds with His sublime wrath. He painted us, say the flowers. He gave me my splendid arches, say the heavens. We are sparks that drop from His splendid robe, say the stars, and passing before us His beautiful, glorious and perfect figure was stamped upon us, say the angel and man. In this way some things represent His grandeur, others His majesty, others His omnipotence, but the angel and man especially represent the treasures of His goodness, the marvels of His grace, and the splendor of His beauty."

"Look at the movement of the world and ask yourselves what has given to it motion. In nature inert matter does not exist. From the stars that whirl around in the immensity of space to the crystal that is formed in the bowels of the earth; from the butterfly flitting from flower to flower to the eagle hovering in the ambient air; from the worm to the soul of man all are moving. And who can suggest a single improvement in this great fabric of creation, no mortal

shall ever be able to suggest a single one, and should any one madly make the attempt he shall not mend, but make things worse. Now if all parts of the universe be so constituted and governed as that it would not be possible to conceive how they could be better adapted both for utility and effect, how can the conclusion be resisted that there exists a supremely wise and all provident Intelligence? Art effects nothing without the direction of mind, how then shall nature do without it? Bring a machine so constructed as to represent the heavenly bodies with all their various and complicated notions; do as Posidonius did when Cæsar invaded Great Britain, exhibit an orrery to a savage people, and will they be of opinion that the wondrous art which has mimicked the revolutions of the celestial spheres was constructed without the aid of reason? And shall ingenuity be attributed to an ordinary mechanic on account of a puerile attempt at imitation while it is denied that a Deity was required to form the vast original?"

What but the continuance of God's creative will upholds the world in existence. What but His regulating providence makes the elements of the world keep their place, their proportions and their equable balance so admirably tempered to human needs. What makes the earth and the orbs of heaven to move in their appointed courses? "What makes the sun to glow with a splendor softened to the requirements of human eyes and human life? What causes the winds to breathe in gentle gales, or to blow with purging vehemence? What makes the ever-changing clouds to

muster in their squadrons and career before the winds, acting as revivers of the earth and as curtains from the solar heat? What causes the showers to fall, the streams to flow, the seas to agitate their purifying waves; the earth to germinate in flowers and fruits; the air to feed the flame of life, the waters to fertilize, all nature to bring forth? Some hidden cause, it is God. Science may trace the dependencies of things upon each other on the visible side, and may follow the links of the lower end of the chain of causation, but what and where is the primal force from which all causation springs? What primal force moves all material things that are in their nature passive? What keeps them orderly, temperate, and measured in their movements, whether worlds, elements, or things that vegetate, or that move with the force and the harmony of animal life; we may ask in vain so long as we search for their causes in material nature. The divine Author of all is the first Mover of all, whilst He Himself is immovable. The world is a book, it is an admirable work, an exhaustless source of instruction, pleasure and amusement. Unlike some books it bears reperusal, unlike others it never requires a second edition. It has a way of reproducing its leaves, as Time's skeleton finger stains and mars them and presents fresh pages to its readers as they hurry past from the cradle to the grave. Humanity as it rises and sinks in wave after wave, gazes on them in admiration as it passes along. But the book remains ever ancient and ever new while intelligences flit past it and are gone, and like the footprints on the

sand of the seashore we know that someone has passed. So is it with the world, creation reveals the hand of the Great Creator, God." The leading French atheists of the last century were assembled in society on one occasion and when indulging in their atheistic views Diderot exclaimed, "Let us appoint the Abbé Galiani a defender of God." And the Abbé said, "One day at Naples there was a man in our company who took up six dice, and bet he would throw the number six. He did so. But six times running he threw the number six. Then everyone cried out, The dice have been dealt with; on examination this was found out to have been the case. Now, gentlemen philosophers, when I consider the order of nature perpetually returns, and how constant its movements are amidst such infinite diversities; when I also consider how this one chance preserves such a world as this which we see, notwithstanding a hundred million chances that might derange the order, or destroy it altogether, I am led to exclaim that the world has been dealt with." This unexpected sally reduced the adversaries of the existence of God to silence.

The materialist professes that matter and motion are eternal. Specific gravity, attraction, repulsion hold the heavenly bodies and spin them from eternity. These professors of science look as far as a given point and stop there; they err by not going still further and inquiring what is the primary power that created all these forces. True science answers back and points out clearly the fallacies of these men, thus are

the very weapons wrenched from their hands and turned to club them. Science cannot give us an answer with regard to the world's creation. It ventures to reply, but it is merely hypothetical. The laws of nature can give no account of their own origin. Laws do not explain everything, their own origin has to be explained, as also their adaptation to certain ends, and to a plan visible in all phenomena. The fact of these laws not being able to account for themselves, and the very order they reveal supposes the existence of a Supreme Legislator. "Laws govern, and yet they are themselves slaves." The position of laws with regard to the universe is also happily expressed in that quotation from Proudhon, "It is just as absurd to refer the system of the universe to physical laws, without any regard to the commanding Ego, as to attribute the victory of Marengo to strategical combinations without taking the first Consul into account." "If the universe had a beginning, this beginning by the very nature of the case, was supernatural," says Mill. Nature can account for that which exists, but not for that which by hypothesis preceded what exists. "After all," says Virchow, "no one knows what existed before that which exists. Science has only the data which the existing world affords. Naturalism goes beyond experience, it establishes itself as a system. But systems are much more the result of speculation than the result of experience."

Again what is the origin of life? I will tell you, says science; it is matter under the influence of mois-

ture, heat, and light generating beings spontaneously. Light, heat, and moisture act upon inert matter, and flowers, fruit, and man blossom into life. The adversaries of religion armed themselves with the doctrine of heterogeneity to maintain that life springs from matter without the intervention of the supernatural. But we never have seen life come forth from the mineral kingdom, it has never been produced in the retorts of men of science, nor has it ever issued from the immense alembic of nature. Men who maintain such doctrine have never passed the stage of hypothesis. Whence, therefore, comes life? The physical and natural sciences can give no answer. Revelation replies and tells us that all things come into existence by divine creation. The whole of creation, wherein everything is coördinated and linked together through all space, is the work of the divine Architect. It has been proved beyond all doubt that spontaneous generation is impossible, and therefore life must have been created. From theory to theory these men fly, like hunted foxes they run from cover to cover until they are unearthed for the last time and scotched. The latest expedient is that all living things came from a small number of types, and probably from one unique species primitively created. Among the representatives of this primordial kind were produced accidental varieties which, in perpetuating and accentuating themselves more and more, formed distinct varieties. Among these kinds further accidental variations produce genera. In like manner these developed into orders, classes, and kingdoms. In the

course of these successive transformations, accumulated during millions of centuries before we arrive at existing conditions of things, a primitive rudimentary being, an earthworm, or perhaps a single organic cell came to be transformed, in the first place into vegetables and animals of very simple organization, and these, by degrees formed the plants and animals of all the existing orders. The followers of this theory explain how these transformations were wrought. They say there is a perpetual struggle for existence among living beings, and in this struggle little by little the strongest and the best suited for survival conquered and destroyed the weakest and the least suited. As soon as an alteration was wrought in the organization of one of these beings, if it were of a sort likely to be of service to it, it transmitted it to its progeny, rendering them, in turn, more and more perfect. If on the other hand, a hurtful change arose, it tended to their extinction, and disappeared with them. Darwin calls this the Law of Natural Selection, which preserves the useful and roots out the hurtful modifications of species. Thus the struggle for life and natural selection, to which must be added the correlation of increase, the influence of environment, temperature, heat, and other local surroundings are the causes by which Darwin explains the succession of beings which proceed from a primitive organism, including all existing species, besides those that are extinct, the fossil remains of which are found in the bosom of the earth. These fossils appearing successively through the geological periods of types more

and more perfect, from mollusks to fishes, then reptiles, then birds, then marsupials, then hoofed mammifers, then apes, then man, appeal to the theorists of evolution, and furnish for them certain data for their theory.

How futile the attempt to bolster up this theory is shown from the life of the great mammifers such as the dinoceras, which perished when the delicate creatures of that period lived. Strength, therefore, does not prevent the destruction of a being. The smallest and weakest animals lived and propagated while the most gigantic and strongest disappeared. Therefore, the survival of the fittest cannot explain the formation of the species. The upholders of this theory appeared to buttress their argument of the survival of the fittest by the influence of natural selection, which, profiting by the smallest favorable variations, preserves them by the law of heredity, and accumulates them during thousands of years. Recent experiments overthrow the transformist hypothesis, for natural selection brings back to the primitive type varieties that have branched off from it, and this has been proved not alone in the animal but also in the vegetable kingdom. Again the sterility of hybrids shows that the law of propagation in nature has a limit. To a certain point propagation can go, then there is a stop, and no further will this law allow propagation. If such a law did not exist to prevent the intermixture of species, life would cease. Time, climate, and many other external circumstances may, and do change organisms, but they don't beget new

species. A retrograde movement is more likely than an improved one. This we see verified in the degradation of races, this we see in an unpruned gooseberry bush where the intervention of man is necessary to preserve the horticultural kingdom from growing into a wilderness of stunted shrubs. It must be observed that the Creator observed a great unity of design in the construction of certain beings. This unity of design the Creator expanded into variety, modifying the general plan to suit the particular plan, and this particular plan in no way disturbs the general plan. In some animals we see certain similar parts of their bodies retrenched or multiplied, but this is no argument to prove that we all descend from a common ancestor by a gradual transformation, but points out the handiwork of an intelligent power. Take, for example, any animal that is with us to-day, and compare it with the fossils of that animal sculptured in the dawn of its existence upon the primitive rocks and we find no change in them, they show no difference after so long an interval from the similar species of to-day. How can a scientist say that vertebrates originated from simpler forms, such as worms or mollusks? One of our greatest students of natural philosophy, Vogt, says, that he could not conjecture even an hypothetical pedigree for them. Such a theory has not passed beyond the stage of hypothesis, and a conjectural foundation would be a very poor basis to build a science upon. The first germs of life must be dated, and if it can't be shown from whence they come we must be forced to conclude that they

were created by God. The gradual transition from animals to man is not therefore a scientific fact, it is a pure and simple hypothesis. There exists, therefore, an inscrutable Being everywhere manifest of whom we can conceive neither the beginning nor the end. When, therefore, we contemplate the heavens with its whirling worlds, "like barks launched in the skies," when we gaze on the beauty of the flowers in Spring, on the golden sheaves in Summer, on the succulent fruits in Autumn, on the calm night's cold in Winter, and each never defaulting, we are coerced to believe in the existence of some great divine Workman. Through the crystals of the rocks, in every molecule of matter, in the painted wings of birds and butterflies, in the colors and perfume of flowers and foliage we see the beauty and skill of a divine Artist. But when we ascend still higher on the grade of creation and arrive at man, here we stand on the summit of earthly perfection which causes us to pause and wonder at this marvelous work of the Creator, a creature endowed with reason and destined for immortality, a creature whose reason leads to God, and whose conscience proclaims to us His moral law. "O Thou Almighty One, Magnificent, Eternal Being, Creator of all things, teach all to know and love Thee."

MAN

On the lips of every mother we can place the words of the mother of the Machabees, "I know not how you were formed in my mind for I never gave you breath, nor soul, nor life, neither did I frame the limbs of each of you." Let us, therefore, submit this creature man to our thoughtful consideration and see from whence has he come.

In all things created there is matter and there is form, and matter cannot exist without form. Matter is created from nothing, and the form determines the matter. When we say that God created the world out of nothing, when we say that God stood on the brink of chaos and by the music of His omnipotent word evoked beauty, splendor, and intelligence from nothing, we don't mean to say that He gave fecundity to nothing, we don't mean to say that from zero came reality, no, for nothing can be produced out of nothing, that is God could not give existence to nothingness, but we mean that He gave being to that which was not. In the forms of matter we see vestiges or shadows of the attributes of the Creator, just as the form of what an inventor is about to make is in his mind before he makes it, so are the forms of all things in the mind of the Creator before He created them. The first creation of this world was chaotic matter,

and its form was just as much as its chaotic nature required. The Creator spoke the *fiat* and this rude elementary matter sprang into existence. The next move on the part of the Creator gave this rough matter its distinctions, its several forms that determine its natures, kinds and species.

Geological research shows us that prior to the creation of man there was an upward progress in all created beings, starting from dead matter to the lowest forms of animal life, and from these to a class of a still higher nature. It was predestined in the scheme of the Creator for the dynasty of the fish to be succeeded by the still higher dynasty of the reptile, and that of the reptile by the still higher dynasty of the sagacious mammals; and no matter how searching the examination of the chain of created beings may be, no other conclusion can be arrived at, but that these separate links were separate creations. Another matter worthy of note in these separate creations is, while we pass up from the first layers of the earth's strata in the Lower Silurian age to the Quartenary, if we examine the fossils of animal life we can't escape observing a progress in the succession of beings, from the mollusk to man. Furthermore we see in this progress an increasing resemblance to man, we see a form of structure improving as we go along, commencing almost from zero to man, but this connection is not the consequence of a direct lineage between the fauna of different ages, their similarity is to be sought in the mind of the great Creator Himself, Who, by a kind of preparatory gradation in these successive

types was about to produce a creature superior to all that preceded him. They were a kind of mute prophecy which was to be fulfilled in the advent of man. All the previous types pointed with a prophetic finger to man. Fish and reptile, bird and beast, told of the coming of man.

Scene succeeded scene, generation after generation passed away. After the creation of the elements in their chaotic state, the *first* epoch of formation is the creation of light. The *second* epoch is the dividing of the waters. The elements have now been so arranged as to be prepared to receive organic formations. Then came the *third* epoch which consisted in the creation of the vegetable kingdom with all its wonderful variety of form, beauty and fruitfulness. Let plants and the lower forms of animal life come forth, cried the Creator, and His voice was obeyed. Let fishes come forth and inhabit the waters of the deep, said the Creator, and the seas became teeming with life. But these creations were dull and dark, they knew not why they were created, there was a great deep to be filled up. The light of the sun was then called to appear from behind its dark shroud and to shine upon the earth with greater brilliancy, to garnish and cheer the earth, and to be the guardian of its times and seasons, and thus form the *fourth* epoch, and prepare the earth for the *fifth* epoch of the creation of God which filled the air and earth with animal life. Let birds come forth, cried the Creator, and the air became resplendent with the beautiful plumage of birds. Let the beasts of the earth come

forth, cried the Creator, and animals of various kinds filled the mountains and prairies, the forests and the glens, "ravenous creatures with trenchant teeth, barbed sting, and sharp spine enveloped in pelts like a glittering armor of steel and plate." Nevertheless those innumerable creatures of forms so various had no knowledge of their Creator. One more epoch is wanting for which all the preceding epochs were so many preparations. They provided for the creation of a creature who would know his Creator. The birth of this creature is fast approaching. One more link has to be forged to complete the mighty chain of creation. The time has arrived, the home of this creature is furnished, the larder is filled with provisions for his use and nourishment, for his instruction and delight. Yes, when the species and genera of other kingdoms filled to an unprecedented fullness the earth the Creative hand seemed to pause. The finished creation of all previous formations demanded its Lord, and the language of the Creator changes. There is some mysterious consultation with the other mysterious powers, and after these mysterious deliberations the Creator again speaks, "Let us make man to our image and likeness." And at length creation receives its deputed monarch, molded by God's own finger and in God's own likeness man enters on the great stage of life a being that shall partake of earth and spirit, that part of him that is of the earth will be nourished from the elements of the world, and that part of him that is of the spirit shall be nourished with the light and life from the spiritual world.

"Yes, an exquisite creature has now appeared as the crowning work of the Creator, a creature rich in native faculty, pregnant with yet undeveloped seeds of all wisdom and knowledge, tender of heart and pure of spirit, formed to hold high communion with the Creator," and to breathe and live in loving gratitude among all the other creatures subservient to him. What an impassable chasm lies between him and his predecessors, he can review all the past creations which sprung from the blank depths of bygone ages as well as peer into the mysterious future and await one succession more, not a new creation, but an elevation. There is no repetition of the past. The Creator broke the mold of each creation as He created each creature; among the fossilized forms of both fauna and flora we have not yet found a record of a dynasty once passed away, ever to return again. "Man occupies the central point of the great circle of being; so that those lines which pass singly through it of the inferior animals stationed at its circumference meet in him; and thus as the focus in which the scattered rays unite, he imparts by his presence a unity and completeness to creation which it would not possess if he were absent." Notwithstanding this important place which man holds in creation each time that a babe is born we hear a cry denoting pain, we hear a groan denoting distress. Another creature with the seal of its Creator comes to take its place as an actor on the great stage of life. Look at it, it has entered the world in a penitent posture with its arms crossed upon its breast, it bears a mark

of servitude. We see a tiny fragile body, quivering, trembling, helpless in its fragile frame, but what potentialities lie there, they are in a profound sleep and await until the dawn of life loses the freshness of the morn. Two great agencies are concealed in that casement of flesh, they are always busy building up, constructing their instruments of warfare to be used one day in a long and fierce battle against each other. Yes, in that fragile envelope wrapt in swaddling clothes lie seminal qualities of a diverse nature, sown in the moral field of man in the spring-time of his life. In it there is the fontal source of good and evil, and a congenial soil for both. How will they grow up? Will the tree of life be productive of good fruit, or will it be productive of bad fruit, will it produce the fruit of life or the fruit of death, will it grow heavenward and seek light, or will it grow earthward and seek gloom and darkness, will the virtues of one agency by the noxious weeds, the over-growth, the poisonous things of the other, will they become stunted in their growth and expansion? What mother can hold this trembling mystery to her breast without many such questions as these arising in her mind?

I said one more succession is awaited. What is it? Within that fragile envelope of vegetable and animal life with its rosebud hues, lies the pulsating soul, and on account of it the Creator's work still goes on, making the high succeed the low, in elevating, raising, and beautifying this soul. Man's responsibility, man's immortality forbid that he should be like all those

creations that preceded him, hence the Creator's work of elevation in fitting and preparing imperfect man for a perfect future state continues. How absurd then appears the teaching of those agnostics and philosophers who endeavor to explain this upper progress of being in the evolution of an incomprehensible law, through which in the course of unreckoned ages, the lower forms of animal life have risen into a higher, and the animal creation without thought or care on its part, and without intelligence on the part of the operating law, have risen from irrational to rational beings, from mere promptings of instinct, from worms, jellyfishes, kangaroos, apes and baboons to Bacons, Newtons, and Galileos.

Let us follow this great work of God. He grows into manhood through the inexhaustible source of God's providence. The sun shines to give him light and warmth, the clouds career before the winds sometimes to act as curtains to protect him from the solar heat, and at other times to rain down their gentle dews. The atmosphere is tempered to suit human needs. The earth is busy in its various departments to feed the flame of life. The forests give him wood to build places of habitation, its sea supplies him with nutritious fish, its soil teems with living beings to minister to his wants, its minerals and metals yield up their treasures for his use and ornamentation, its animals grow materials to supply him with garments to protect him from frosts and chills, its fields produce for him rich bending harvests, and its gardens, golden fruits and fragrant flowers. What a combination of

labor, of industry, has been brought together under the laws of an over-ruling providence to supply man with the necessaries of life.

Man is no predial serf, his destiny is not to tear and scrape the clay of the earth solely, his destiny is of a much higher nature. We must not measure our being by the amount of strength we possess, for the lion of the forest out-distances us. There is no comparison between us and the king of the wild woods. But there is a light within man, the light of an incomparable mind which discriminates him from the rest of animal life. "Let there be light," said the Maker of the universe, and suddenly a dark and dreary chaos was molded into a star of beauty, capable of radiating brightness to other space-wandering worlds, and ever since these words fell from the lips of God, the undulations and pulsations of light formed a sphered music singing an endless song of the excellence and glory of God. The greatest and humblest of the vegetable world proclaim their direct dependency upon the mysterious forces which are bound together in the silver thread of light. What this light is to the world, the light of reason is to man. His high order of intelligence has placed him immeasurably above the beast, there is an enormous abyss between them that cannot be bridged. He looks up into the shifting panorama of the heavens, into the amazing amplitude of cosmic space and can contemplate the supreme magnificence of the scale of the stellar universe, the pageantry of the heavenly bodies with their complicity of movements. He counts the restless

corpuscles of an atom, surveys the cells of a flower, he tunes nature's lyre and produces soul-stirring and ravishing emotions of harmony from magic music. Look at the marvelous results from his industry, he is changing the whole face of nature. No longer has the earth or the things of it been able to conceal from him their secrets. He plants the vine to produce his drink, he tills the soil to grow him grain for bread, cities spring up as trophies of his diligence and skill. It is no misnomer to call him the *fellow-worker* with the Creator. See him in the garden adding beauty to the flowers, more delicacy and fertility to the fruits, and richer succulency to vegetables. See him in the domain of the animal world, he teaches the dog virtues of fidelity and affection, the horse he trains to assist him in the field of his industry, or to join him as a companion in sport, the cow under his surveillance yields him more products for his dairy than nature asks, and within his pens and folds he cultivates the fleece of the sheep to make its texture and fiber longer and finer. He follows in the track of the Creator, and in those provinces where his Maker expatiated before him, the occult law inherent in these organisms meets in him a developing instinct, a persevering ingenuity and skill, and thereby adds fertility, productiveness, and improvement to each of these departments. No one but a reflective intelligence could construct such high scaffoldings in nature. It is therefore no misnomer to call man the *improver* of creation. How absurd therefore is the teaching of those who associate man with the gorilla and chimpan-

zee. With this same intelligence he reckons the millions of cells formed by the active spores of a mushroom, the billions of animalcule in one pound of rotten stone, and the countless infusoria in one drop of water. He looks on the beauty of the flowers in springtime, the productive power of nature yielding golden sheaves of grain and mellow fruit in Autumn, and he pours forth unto the providence of God his prayers of thanksgiving. Man therefore believes in a Deity instinctively, as all these attest the universal presence of a sovereign Intelligence.

When we look with admiration and contemplate any one part of the world-famed picture of our "Lord's Transfiguration" by Michael Angelo, or on the "Descent from the Cross" by Rubens, each part of either of these wonderful pictures has reference to the whole picture, but if we take away the prominent part, viz., Christ Transfigured, or Christ on the Cross, we would render the picture meaningless, and both combined reflect the glory of the great artist who painted them. In like manner it may be said that the inferior parts of creation bear the same relation to man as the different characters in each of these wonderful pictures bear to that part which the artist contemplated when placing on canvas his lofty ideas, viz., Christ Transfigured or Christ being taken down from the cross. The principle feature, therefore, in either of these pictures exercises a certain dominion over the inferior characters or other parts, it gives to each of them a meaning which is depicted by the great artists. In like manner does man exercise a dominion over all

the inferior creatures of creation and gives to them a meaning for their existence, and both combined reflect the glory of God. The exercise of this dominion of man over the other creatures was a grant to man by the Creator when through a formal decree He said, "Let him," meaning man, "have dominion over the fishes of the sea, the birds of the air, and the beasts of the whole earth, and every creature that moveth on the earth." The diamond or ruby knows not its own wealth, the orchid or rose in the flower garden knows not its beauty, the lion or horse has not the light of reason to know its strength or usefulness. This knowledge is reserved for man, their viceroy. We cannot say of man that he is as ignorant as the precious stone, or metal, or flower, or beast. For we hear a voice coming from the depths of our soul inquiring, for what object am I made? what will be my end?

To make anything, or to do anything without an object would be stupidity, would be unintelligible, and unless we know the ultimate end of anything, we do not know the reason why it exists. But when we know the ultimate end for which any one thing is made, then we know the principle of its constitution. How defective our knowledge of the horse or dog would be unless we knew its relation to man. How defective our knowledge of a musical instrument would be unless we knew it was invented to produce sweet melody. Now when we know the ultimate end of man, when we know the object for which he was created then we know the principle of his constitution.

When Michael Angelo painted the marvelous picture of the Transfiguration, he did not paint that picture for itself, he had in his mind the purpose of awakening in the human mind sublimity of thought and devotional feeling, the object was something more noble than a piece of dull canvas with various pigments and colors. Following this course of reasoning, when man was fashioned from the clay of the earth, and his soul from the living breath of the Creator, the object of his creation was not for man himself, nor for anything in his environment, he was made for something outside himself, and for something nobler than himself. Can we discover anything on this earth nobler than man? No, therefore, we must listen to that voice that proclaims within us, and with no uncertain or equivocating accents, that the soul of man has a capacity for infinite things. Man feels their magnetism, their attraction, and his impulse towards them.

Could this world be the object of man's life? Can we find in it that which can satiate the desires of the soul? Are the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life sufficient of themselves to satisfy the craving of the soul? No, he cannot find here a fixture of tenure, no matter how firm the grasp he has of the world, he feels there is nothing in it but hollowness. He feels the body decaying bit by bit and the soul ripening more and more. If the world was the object of man's destiny, he would have in him the image of the world and the crowning excellences of his life would rest in the three concupiscences already referred to, and would constitute

the bright constellations in the firmament of his soul, but we know they darken, disorder, and blur the soul. The voice of humanity through historians, poets, and philosophers teaches us that man after he has gained everything in this world to satisfy his ambition, he is still unhappy, for the wants of the soul are of another kind. Man is ever on the lookout for something to which he may attach himself, and in which he may find contentment, but he cannot find it in himself nor in the world, that which he looks for is God.

We cannot overlook man's moral sentiment, man's religious feeling, which differentiates him most of all from the lower animal creation in which we detect no form of religious sentiment, not even a scintillation, neither could any course of training produce it. But in man religious sentiment is peculiar to him, and it is there not through any course of philosophical teaching, but is there by virtue of the power of the Creator, and forces him to adore and worship the Omnipotent Being.

With all these charms of intelligence and religious fervor man would be a failure in creation if there were no life beyond the grave. Man has divine elements in him as well as human. He is a child of grace as well as a child of nature, and the true nature of our being should be gauged by the amount of truth and good there is in us. The true man is within us and cannot be reached by the scalpel of the anatomist. When we first commenced to understand the language of our mother and passed that stage of life when we watched with anxiety her outstretched arms to teach us to walk,

we recall from the treasury of the sweetest memory how our mother used to point to heaven as our future domicile, and the home of Him from whom we have all things, then with uplifted hands the first simple accents of prayer were babbled from our lips. But later on our minds became more matured and we commenced to wonder what does this brilliancy of midday splendor, or the starlit night mean; why do I exist; where am I going; am I here for no other purpose but to sink back again into dust from whence I came? As reason, thought, and intelligence grow, so, with them grows a capacity for eternal things, and while my body cleaves to the earth, my soul soars to some region higher.

Everything existing has its own peculiar characteristics, and from these characteristics we can form an unerring judgment of the nature of that thing. We feel heat, and from our experience of heat we conclude it comes from combustion or fire. We take a piece of ice in our hands and feel that it is cold, and we have no difficulty in judging the nature of ice. Now we feel a something within us, which is distinct from the body, we examine its understanding, its will, its desires, and reasonably form our conclusion of the nature of this something which we call the soul. In this soul we feel an innate desire to break those chains that fetter us to the earth in order that we may fly to a more serene atmosphere; we wish that the prison doors be battered down of our earthly bondage in order that we may move in a land more congenial to the spirit within us. A form shines on the beautiful and bright

mirror of creation, it is the face of the Creator. The more we look on that face, the greater is the desire on our part to get closer to it, and we conclude that it is He and not the mirror that is the object of our life. The mirror and all its beauties are transient, but that which is mirrored is eternal. Forthwith I conclude that I have now found out the reason why I exist. I see my destiny. I am immortal. A voice speaks to me from that mirror, and says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, Who is, Who was, and Who is to come."

Death arrives, what is it? It is only a physical and chemical disintegration of the material particles of our organism. The soul is simple, is spiritual, and could not share in the fate of the body, because it is an immaterial substance, it cannot therefore be subject to disintegration. It must subsist as it is, and can only be destroyed by annihilation.

In the late Russo-Japanese War the Japanese soldiers distinguished themselves for their bravery; they rushed intrepidly to death because they believed their souls would live elsewhere. This was the secret of their courage on the battlefield. Hope in a future life is the patrimony of the human race, it is as deeply rooted in the human race as belief in God. Long before the Christian era it gave rise to the worship of the Manes, and the Hebrew nation believed that at death they went back to their fathers, "into Sheol." Why should what is noblest on earth, the very breath of God, why should the human soul die? Renan once said, "The man who sits down to think

of his future destiny, strikes an arrow into his heart, which he will never be able to pull out." "If I had no other proof," says Rousseau, "of the immortality of the soul than the triumph of the wicked and the oppression of the good in this world, this alone would prevent all doubt. Such shocking discord in the harmony of the universe would call for an explanation. I should say to myself, All does not end with this life, things will be set aright after death." "From the heart of human misery is drawn the strongest argument in favor of a future life, it obliged Providence to a to-morrow as a tardy justification of its government. In view of the miseries and unequal allotments of this life, we appeal to God, and when our cry goes unanswered, when all appears to be in disorder around us, there is only one possible conclusion, viz., that a time will come when full justice will be rendered to everyone; that death is not a final collapse, but that the soul is destined for another life where satisfaction will be made alike to the divine Justice and human reason." "If death," says Plato, "were the dissolution and annihilation of the whole man, the wicked man would be too great a gainer, being delivered at the same time from his body, his soul, and his vices. But since the soul is immortal, it has no other means of escaping the evils which await the wicked than by learning wisdom and practicing virtue." When we see men warring against religious conviction and a future life, they are endeavoring to free their morals from restraint and their mind from a rebuking conscience.

All assure us that we are not as the butterfly which crumbles into dust after unfolding its beauty during the bright days of Summer. The deep and fervent language of the heart of man is to be believed and not mistrusted when it tells us of a future state, where our capacities will receive their full development, and every wish its complete satisfaction. There will be no wandering abroad in search of what we cannot find at home. These longings of our soul have been put there by our Creator, and for some purpose. He has filled us with insatiable yearnings which this earth cannot supply, and He would be a deceiver if He would not make provision for their realization. Surely He did not plant them there in mockery, if He did, man would be the great error of creation. He would be the painful toiler whose hopes should be counted by his disappointments, the weary and thirsty traveler deceived by the phantom mirage, the befooled expectant of a happiness which he is never to enjoy. But no, God is no deceiver. Man is the chosen heir of the future, and when we cry out to Him for happiness in the hereafter, we may rest assured that He will reply back and say, "You are children of eternity and not of time."

MAN'S OBJECT

Everything that is made is made for some object. The mechanic who makes a piece of mechanism from a toy to a locomotive engine has in his mind the object for which he is making it. If, for an example, a watchmaker makes a watch, his object is that all the springs and wheels, so beautifully and mutually adjusted, may record the right time. But he never could make that watch unless he had known what time was or meant; unless he had a knowledge of the object, time. The eye of man is the subject of light, and if we never had seen light we never could have understood why the eye was made, or made as it is made. We would have a very defective knowledge of the watch or eye if we had not known their relations to time and light. Let us ascend higher in the world of creations and apply this course of truthful reasoning to the greatest creature on earth, Man. Man is a subject made for some object, and in order that we may understand why man was made, and how he is made, we must have a knowledge of that object for which he was made, and when he finds this object, then man will know himself in his first principle. And we would have a very defective knowledge of man if we did not know the object for which he was made and his relations to that object.

There are intermediate and mediate objects. The watch, the locomotive engine, the beautiful hat with its plumes and feathers were not made to be placed in windows for the admiration of the people that pass by, such a conclusion would be absurd. It other words they were not made for themselves, if they were, this would be their mediate object. But they are put in show places for the purpose of attracting purchasers; the sale of these articles is the mediate object, while their exhibition is only the intermediate object. Therefore, they were not made for themselves. Neither was man made for himself, and the man who believes that he himself is his own object is quite ignorant of his constitution. The intermediate objects of man are the things of the earth which help him along the road of life to the Mediate Object Who made him. Whenever we stop half-way and look on the things of the earth as the objects of life, then we err by taking the intermediate object for the mediate object.

Unhappily we are so much absorbed with the external things of the world that we are too apt to allow the attention of the internal man to escape us. We are so occupied with man's deviations that we are often lost on the road. But are there any mile pegs on the road of life's journey that indicate to us that we should not be deceived by these intermediate objects, that they are there only to be used by us as helps as we pass along? Yes, there are. The Maker of man is not alone his Maker, but also his Illuminator. And when He made man He placed in him an in-

telligence, a will, a conscience, and through these He teaches us what the fundamental principle of our constitution is, that the object for which He made us is not these transitory intermediate creatures of the world, but for Himself who is the eternal object of our existence. We are not for ourselves but for God. The force of life does not spring from ourselves but from a force outside ourselves, a creator, and this Creator is the object of our life. Suppose you tell your companion that he should not think of anything but himself, he would reply that would be unreasonable, suppose you tell him not to love anything but himself, he would reply, my conscience does not direct so, suppose you tell him not to live for anything but himself, he would reply, my heart does not suggest so, but on the contrary it suggests everything manly and generous in nature. Therefore, man's mind, man's conscience, and man's heart know and feel and acknowledge that man is not made for himself even when his conduct contradicts it.

There is a fundamental principle in the order of God's providence that gives us the key with which we see the plan of the providence of God. That key is this axiom: Everything that is made, is made for some object and end exterior to itself, in which it finds its greatest good. The higher the order of the creature the greater the end for which it was made, and the nobleness of the creature is derived from the nobleness of the end for which it was made. The earth of which man's body was made, reached not its end, or greater good, until it was transformed into

the body of man. The body of man reached not its end or greater good until it was animated by a spiritual soul. The soul reached not even the beginning of her end until God gave her the supernatural light and grace which begins her communion with God. The soul brought into divine relations with God does not reach the consummation of her good until advancing by degrees on the way of truth and justice she reaches the open vision of God, and finds the fullness of good in her beatific union with Him. This is the explanation of those sighs and yearnings of man for something better than he is himself. This is the explanation of those incessant wanderings abroad of his mind and heart in search of what he cannot find at home. This is the explanation why man pours out before eternity the groans of limitless desire. It it quite evident, therefore, that man cannot find the contenting object in himself.

The soul is more than the body, yet the body's attractions arrest us whenever we attempt to reflect on the beauty of the soul and its object. In order, therefore, that we may know our soul we must close the windows of the senses that the interior house be lighted up with a light that is not of the world and then all its secret beauties can be observed, and in the search we shall find the treasure, the great object of our creation. The noblest thing in man is that he bears on him the image and likeness of his Creator. There is a vast difference between the image and likeness. We see the image of George Washington in the marble statue sculptured to represent him, but we

see the likeness of the father in the son. The image is something cold and lifeless, but the likeness is something warm and lifelike. Man as a rational being has the image of God in him, and as a spiritual being has the likeness of God in him. The likeness is something more exalted than the image. The likeness has grades of nobility. The spiritual nobility of man ascends higher and higher according to the graces with which God exalts the image into the likeness of the eternal majesty. The very fact of man being made to the image of God qualifies him of being capable to receive the likeness of God. The image is the natural preparation for the likeness. The first foundation of this likeness we receive in Baptism, it is the supernatural gift of faith, and the inspiration of hope, but the likeness itself is the supernatural gift of charity which gives to the soul the life of divine love.

St. Thomas gives us the three stages in which we move towards God. "First, there is the appetite to know and love God that is formed in our nature. Secondly, there is the actual or habitual knowledge and love of God, formed by grace in our soul. Thirdly, there is the soul advanced to the image and likeness of God's glory. The first image is in all men; the second is in the just; the third is in the blessed." This sublime teaching of St. Thomas shows to us the higher principles of humanity through the invisible elements of the soul, directing their steps towards their ultimate end or object.

Let us accompany man further on in his journey of life. We have seen that it is impossible to under-

stand the nature of anything unless we know the ultimate end for which it exists; this end explains everything. To do anything, to make anything without an end would be the very height of unreasonableness. When we see a tourist with a lot of luggage, on examination of that luggage we approximately form a judgment into what kind of country he is about to visit. He equips himself according to the environments surrounding his journey. We also have seen the nature of man, that he has upon his soul the impress of his Maker, that he is the subject of his Maker. Now man being made for God, he is so equipped in his spiritual nature as to make him capable of union with God. "Jesus saith to them, Whose image and inscription is this? They said to Him, Cæsar's. Then He said to them, Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and to God the things that are God's." The coin of the realm bears the image and inscription of the sovereign. The image and name of the sovereign is cast on perishable metal, and whilst that metal lasts the sovereign asserts his claim. Now the soul of man is the spiritual creation of God, and bears His image and the inscription of His law, and this signet shows the claim that God, man's sovereign, has upon the soul. When man was first formed by his Creator, He gave him a *memory* that was retentive of God without forgetfulness, He gave him an *understanding* by which he knew God without error, He gave him a *will* by which he was to love God without cupidity for other things. But when man violated the law or command of

God, the image of God was not utterly destroyed, we still have memory but it is prone to forgetfulness, we still have our understanding but it is subject to error, we still have love, but it is given to concupiscence. These are the equipments with which we are furnished for our journey of life, but when we lose or misuse them, naturally we perish on the way.

Let us examine some of the outlines of this signet and see if the image of God is in any way effaced by friction with the world; have we allowed the intermediate things of the world to erase that image? It is quite evident that the material things of the world like dense clouds hang between God and man, and obscure the vision of God and spiritual things. They curtain God from us. We are commanded by God to love Him with our whole mind. What is life without love? Love is the wealth of the soul. We are poor without it. Love is the gold of the soul enriching it and making it glow with the brilliancy of its burnished beauty and goodness. When the gifts and powers of the highly gifted are properly devoted what wonderful things they accomplish for the good of mankind, but on the contrary when their gifts are wasted in mental pursuits that seek only vanity, ambition, or pleasure, they disgrace the soul and expend the body. If God has blessed you with a special bodily beauty or exceptional intelligence, consider these as priceless gems. A flaw in a gem, be it a diamond or ruby, deteriorates it, and reduces its value. The flaw of pride or sensuality will deteriorate both your corporal and spiritual beauty. Pride, vanity, lust, are

flaws in the brilliants of the soul. The objects that reach the mind enrich it with knowledge, but the object of our love transforms us to such a degree that we rob the object of our love of some of its gems. When we love God, our soul expands with the qualities of Him who is the object of our love. Love is the most beautiful flower in the garden of heaven, its fragrance predominates over all other fragrances there. And when heaven's atmosphere becomes surcharged with it, celestial zephyrs carry the surplus to earth. Ask yourselves the question, do you obey that command of God and love Him with your mind, with your whole mind? The boundaries of the mind of man are like the ocean, they embrace worlds with all their varied contents, they embrace time with all its moments, they embrace science with all its discoveries, they embrace history with all its facts. The flight of the mind is still further, it passes beyond the limits of the finite and salutes the Infinite from afar, for our aspirations carry us there. The pure flame of love bears the soul on its wings and deposits it in the mansions where all is loveliness. Now what is the nature of our stewardship of this mind? It has a sad history with some. It is employed by them to destroy the cosmical order of the universe by professing that outside the material objects in the world there is no other object for man to live. It labors to haul down its own nobility from its high elevation to a lower plane. If we want a proof of the extravagant errors into which the mind of man plunged with regard to its theories of human nature, we have but to read those

put forth by the philosophers of this unbelieving age. For virtue they give us vice in all its heinous forms. For a God they give us the free indulgence of our brutal passions. For heaven they give us a head crowned with laurel to perpetuate to posterity some relic of our barbarism. This is the teaching of modern philosophy, these are the impure dreams of those who refuse to acknowledge God as the final end of man.

How do we use our will, as an equipment of the soul, to assist us to obtain the object of our life? Its compass, too, is great, even greater than the mind, because we can desire more than we can see or understand. I am afraid we love the world too much; when we love it too much, when we love it extravagantly, when we love it with passion, we become cold in our love for God, and his bright image and likeness become so neglected that their polished surface is obscured. The divine image, the divine likeness has faded away. When we love the world and rarely look beyond it, and become so distracted with it, we make its accumulation of knowledge, human inventions, and the resources of pleasure, the final object of our life, we turn from God who is our object and worship self, and from the fragile materials of our environment we build up a temple where we adore idols of clay, and form a ritual from pride, vanity, and sensuality. We drop down into the abysses of turpitude and degradation, and break the chains of gold that bound us to God.

This idea cannot be more forcibly expressed than

by quoting the language of Brienza. "The human soul, created by God, and capable of God, finds nothing among created things, however rich, or beautiful, that can really make her happy. They cannot enter into competition with the Divine Goodness, who is pleased in His condescension to be the one predeterminate object of human happiness. If you impress the image of a seal in soft wax, and then put some other kind of seal upon that which has already been deeply imprinted, you will not succeed in giving that new impression, but will only spoil the one already made. But if you take the first seal, and fit it into the impression anew, it will exactly correspond in all its reliefs to the hollows left by the first impression. Impress that seal with greater force, and the image of that seal will have greater depth and vividness. So in creating the soul of man, God imprinted His image upon her as with His own divine seal, producing His likeness, and leaving those hollows in her spiritual powers, that can only be filled up and fitted to make her happy by the reliefs of His own divine perfection; and whenever the impression of the image from that divine seal is renewed with greater force, the form of that divine image enters more sharply into the soul and penetrates to greater depths. But if you let any created thing try to seal its image in your spiritual nature, so as to affect you with the attachment of a greater affection, the beautiful image of God will be blurred and spoiled; and the soul, made neither of wax or earthly matter, will feel herself oppressed and deformed."

"Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." And the creatures of the world that come within the range of man's three concupiscences stand between man and God if he abuses them. They form a dense cloud around the soul of man and prevent him from seeing the goal for which he is making. We become so submerged in the world that, the deafening noise and crashing confusion of its commerce smothers the voice of the soul when it wishes to commune with the Being of a higher sphere. The fingers of the world clench tight on the throat of the soul and suffocate it. In its gasps we distinguish but one word: gold, gold, Mammon, Mammon. Man has to accept the creatures and things of the world, because they are the bounteous gifts of God, but he must not see in them, or use them as a seasoning for his sensuous appetites. If he does, then he can never rise above them, and his attempts to soar higher than their plane would be as futile as the attempts of a bird winged from the shot of a sportsman's gun would be to fly into its kingdom of the air. The goods, therefore, of the world are good in themselves, and while their legitimate use, and sometimes their privation, assist us towards the Eternal Good, it happens very often that their abundance and

misuse become dangerous, and their ponderous weight brings our side of the balance downwards. Do not, therefore, allow its lusts, its lies, its vanities to deceive you. Do not permit its phantoms and flatteries to cheat you. Its pleasures are fugitive, its wealth is ungrateful. It is a world of struggles, rivalries and ambitions, of frauds and deceits.

There are three potencies against which the soul of man has to contend in this great battle of the concupiscences. The *first* is the attractiveness of the world's goods, which have no need of painting or cosmetics, they need not anything to beautify their appearance in order to make them more winsome. They smile pleasantly at us, and we unfortunately pause too often to listen to their sweet blandishments. The *second* is our free-will, which is always prone to have its own way, and our powers are chained to it, and have to follow it, it is stronger and in the tug of war it drags them to its side, the downward course. The *third* is the fact of the soul being united to a body unregenerated, a body full of sensuality. The body of man is like a sponge, it absorbs evil through every pore while it swims in the pool where the spawn of human lust and luxury breed, live, and thrive. This matrimonial alliance blinds the intelligence of the soul so much that we often mistake the vapid nothings for the loftier things for which we were made. When you are at the bottom of the moral ladder don't lose courage, creep up again. God calmed the waters of Lake Genesareth at the prayer of St. Peter, He will also calm the invisible waves which ruffle the deep of

the heart, if you supplicate Him as St. Peter did. If the evil odors of sin from the outer world mingle with the scents and flowers of virtue in the inner world, the latter will prevail by cultivation. Man's heart is a temple of false and impure idols, close it up, tear it down, rebuild it, and replace the idols of filth with the emblem of the Crucified that speaks to you of the purest of love. Tear out from your heart that rapacious eagle of a carnivorous nature and put in its place the clean and immaculate dove of holy purity. Do this and you will realize the fragility of human things, for they are weeds, bubbles, dreams.

SHALL OUR BODIES RISE AFTER DEATH?

Death is an inevitable condition for all. There is no power on earth that can arrest it, there is no title that can dispense it, there is no merit that can exempt us from it, there is no artifice that can elude it, there is no dignity that can fly from it, there is no medicine that can free us from it, there is no prayer that can relieve us of it. The bleached hair, the blanched cheek, the furrowed brow will come as precursors of death no matter how unwilling we may be to receive them. As long as the glow of youth and strength blooms on our cheeks, as long as the muscle is strong and supple, as long as the vibrant note of health rings out its power and defiancy, so long do we live merrily and think only of the present, pleasure is our god, and time is slow to supply opportunities to meet the demands of indulgence, and as each day sets with its brilliant bubbles blown out we look for the morrow to hasten on its dawn in order that new fields may be supplied for more love and pleasure although their cups may have bitter dregs. But what a change comes over us when a few weak silken hairs hang loosely as a fringe around our heads. With brow bent towards the earth, and a few more steps are wanting on life's last walk and we bend so low that the discoloring of our flesh is like a reflection of the color of the clay into

which we soon shall mold. The poet beautifully expresses it when he says, " As the leaves of trees the race of man is found, now green in youth, now withering on the ground."

" And if Christ be in you; the body indeed is dead because of sin, but the spirit liveth because of justification. And if the spirit of Him, that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, He that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, shall quicken also your immortal bodies, because of the spirit that dwelleth in you." These sublime words written of man, but inspired by God, contain a great secret of God's wisdom, an incomprehensible mystery of the economy of redemption, namely, as Jesus Christ, although the Son of God, is truly dead, because He took flesh similar to the flesh of sinful man; so ought we die, as far as the body is concerned, because we have a body corrupted by sin. It is also clear from these words of St. Paul that as we are participators of the spirit of God the Father, so are we participators of the great privilege of the resurrection of His divine Son, because by virtue of this Spirit, the very same God, who caused Jesus Christ to rise from the dead, will also be the cause of our resurrection. So that, as we have in common with Jesus Christ the divine filiation as far as the soul is concerned, so should we have in common with Him the privileges of His risen body so far as the body is concerned. This glorious resurrection of the Son of God is not a mystery solely confined to Himself but extended to all Christians.

As we all sinned in Adam and are subject to death

as the penalty of sin as Adam was, so are we all embraced in Jesus Christ and in Him are we resurrected. It is true that in Jesus Christ nailed to the cross, Adam and his posterity, the whole human race was also crucified and died. And the reason is, when the Son of God became Man, He did not unite Himself to one individual man, but to the whole human species, all humanity; and for this reason was He able to bring to a successful issue the cause of all sinners, because He united and represented the nature of all sinners exclusive of penalty. Christ was like a universal man, as one man in whom all men were crucified, died, and buried, and in whom all men were resurrected. Christ acting as the representative of all men, acquired for all men the right of becoming the children of God, and of enjoying all the prerogatives, all the rights of this divine filiation. And as the sin of Adam, the misery it entailed, its punishment, is not contracted unless by means of generation, by means of a carnal birth from sinful man, in like manner by means of a spiritual generation from Jesus Christ do we inherit His sanctity, His grace, His privileges, His recompense. Now this second generation, this spiritual birth, whence men are reborn by Jesus Christ to God is accomplished by baptism. In its waters man leaves the old Adam, and with him as our head leaves the old consequences resulting from his prevaricating, and is reborn as a new creature, and united to Christ becomes a member of the same body of which Jesus Christ is the head. Now as there is nothing more simple, more natural, more just, than that the children should in-

herit the riches and glory of the father, and that the members divide the prerogatives of the head, and be always found united to it; so likewise nothing is more clear than that they who are baptized participate in all the mysteries of Jesus Christ and are sharers of all His merits and in all His privileges. It is conclusive, therefore, that retaining in us this spirit, this grace of Jesus Christ received in baptism we become incorporated with Him; hence as Jesus Christ rose from the dead corporally, so ought we rise, too; and as God the Father has resurrected His Son who is cosubstantial with Him, thus in like manner should He cause our resurrection who are His adopted children.

If we preserve the sanctifying grace which we received in baptism, or lost it through sin and recovered it by penance, and at death we find ourselves incorporated with Jesus Christ, we must rise from the dead as Christ rose. Because the spirit of Christ that abided in our soul, abided also in the body; and as original sin left a poisonous germ of death, so did the divine spirit leave a germ of resurrection and life that cannot be barren and unfruitful but that will in time develop in us and have force to rise from the womb of the earth as lilies hidden by a celestial whiteness, as flowers eternally florescent before God.

When God created all things He so created them that, harmony, order, and proportion were observed between material and formal causes, between bodies and the principles that governed them, in other words a proportion between *matter* and *form* should be strictly observed. For example, the intellectual

spirit is the substantial form of the human body. The Creator when creating the human body, He proportioned it, He harmonized it with the soul so that if the life of the soul be perpetual so should that of the body be perpetual. God, therefore, in the construction of human nature conceded to the body something more that what it had a right to from natural principles; that is, He gave to it a certain incorruptibility by means of which it became a *Matter* in keeping and worthy of being united to a *Form* which was immortal, the soul. Since man by sin disturbed the natural order existing between the soul and body, the primitive order between the soul and body was also disturbed. As the soul was despoiled of sanctifying grace which was divinely infused into it and elevated it to God; so was the body deprived of the disposition divinely accorded to it, of being incorruptible whence it was raised to the dignity of the soul; and death followed which was not the act of God. Death, therefore, is not the natural condition of man, it has been brought about accidentally, as a consequence and an accompaniment of sin. Now, this sad accidentality, that has changed the condition of man, is removed by Jesus Christ. By the merits of His Passion and death He has destroyed death, the same divine virtue has now restored to the body the privilege of incorruptibility which it had originally conceded to it, and by which man shall one day be raised to a life no longer subject to death. When, therefore, we view the resurrection of the body in relation to its end, it is not a miracle or a fact outside the natural laws, but a fact

most natural, most simple, most conformable to the laws primitively impressed upon nature by God; because there is nothing more natural than that matter be reunited to its form, the soul to the body. When, therefore, we speak of the resurrection of the body, we don't speak of any innovation, but of reforming the condition of the body. We don't treat of introducing a new order, but of restoring the old; we don't speak of giving the body a new destiny, but of restoring to it that which it had lost; we don't mean to change the primitive order, but to reinstate human nature to its original position in which God had placed it.

The doctrine of the resurrection discovers for us the title of our future greatness, the soul being immortal lives after the death of the body, but according to its essence it is the substantial form of its body. If the body would not rise again there would be a form always separated from its matter. The perpetual corruption of the human body is, therefore, contrary to nature, and it is contrary, also, to nature that the soul should always be separated from the body. Now that which is contrary to nature cannot last always, therefore, the soul cannot always be separated from the body. Far then be it from being incomprehensible to say that there will be a resurrection of our bodies, but it would be strange and inconceivable to teach an eternal widowhood of the soul from the body.

Furthermore, without the resurrection of the body the natural order of the universe would be compromised, it would be imperfect, it would be somewhat

unhinged. The fruits of the earth become decomposed and reproduce themselves. Every species of seed after it becomes corrupt sprouts more lustily and exuberantly. All created things die and rise again in a new form. In the midst of this ebb and flow of things, it is impossible that man alone, their earthly sovereign, should die never to rise. No, it would be more in keeping with all other beings that the old alliance of the soul and body be recalled never again to be severed, to be united with Jesus Christ to reign with Him forever in heaven because united they served Him on earth. In this manner would the harmony of creation be sustained, and the wonderful harmony of the universe be without an exception to mar its marvelous order.

St. Paul speaking of our manner of resurrection says, "But some man will say: How do the dead rise again? or with what manner of body shall they come? Senseless man, that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be; but bare grain, as of wheat, or some of the rest. But He giveth it a body as He will; not to every seed its proper body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but one is the flesh of men, another of beasts, another of birds, another of fishes." In order to understand the force of this reply of St. Paul it will be necessary to keep before our mind these two truths. First, when it is said that we rise in the very same body, it is not necessary for the maintaining of this proposition that the risen body should have precisely all the same matter that it had during life. In fact, this very body that we have now is not, rigor-

ously speaking, the same body in all its parts which we had when we were born. In the cradle we were very puny and delicate, but now we are big and robust. As we increase in years the aid of food, drink, air, heat, and many other elements that we know of occur externally to the nourishment and increment of the body, so that the body of an adult may be said not to retain any of that matter which composed it when a babe. That first matter which formed the infant by little and little is renewed by other matter, and as the infant increases in years the body becomes completely made up from extraneous elements. Yet all these changes do not imply that the body of the adult is different from that rocked in the cradle. Because the soul is the substantial form of the body and gives to the body its definite being and life, and as the soul in the different ages of man is always the same, so through it, the body has always the same definite, substantial being, and accordingly always remains the same. Secondly, because the force of vegetation, nutrition, and growth of the body resides in the soul, it is the soul that unites to the preëxisting matter in the body all that which the body receives from external substances, and it is the soul that transforms these new materials and assimilates them to that which was before in the body, and makes them become the property of the body to form its very flesh. Now as the soul is always the same in the exercise of this agency, in like manner is the body always the same to which it is united notwithstanding the constant losses, and continual renovations to which it is subject.

In what, therefore, consists the miracle of the resurrection of our bodies? God will effect in one instance what takes the whole time of our life to effect in us. From a germ scarcely visible in the maternal womb, from a tiny infant come to light, is formed with time and by the supply of external substances, this body so grand and so perfect. In like manner at the last day, from a small particle of dust that remains from our bodies, by the accession of external substances God will re-form in an instant of time for each of us a perfect body; and as our body of to-day, although renewed, enlarged, and grown by means of external substances, is numerically the same as that when an infant because it is formed from the same matter, united to the same soul; so will our body risen from the dead by the omnipotence of God, be numerically the same as that we had in the early hours of life, because united to the same soul, and because formed by God upon the same basis of the same matter, the only difference being, what will be accomplished at the last day in the twinkling of an eye is now being done leisurely and with time.

From these observations, the mind of St. Paul is clearly understood, namely, that God will do unto our bodies at the last day, that which He does to the plants all around us. There existed nothing of the plants but a tiny germ, and God assimilates to this germ external substances, to it He gives increment, and forms of it a tree, in like manner as nothing remains of our bodies but a particle of dust, God will add to it other substances to reproduce the body.

Our dust in the hands of God shall be like unto the little seed in the womb of the earth, which is a beginning, a base of a new reproduction; and as the tree formed is numerically the same as what was in the germ, although it has nothing identical with it but the germ and substantial form, everything else has come to it from external substances; such will be the case in the resurrection of our bodies re-formed by God in the manner just described, it shall be numerically the very same body as we had in life, although preserving nothing identical except a little dust and the substantial form of the soul.

But what has become of the bodies that have not even a grain of dust left, such as bodies that pass into other substances in the great laboratory of nature, some consumed by fire, others eaten by wild beasts, by vultures, by fishes, and some by cannibal man himself? The flesh of these bodies has been changed into other substances to form other bodies. St. Paul has said not every body has the same conditions or characteristics, the same nature. The flesh of an irrational animal is not the same as that of man. The difference between flesh and flesh lies in this: By the natural law matter should follow the conditions of its *form*. Now the flesh of the brute entirely perishes, because its *form* perishes, that is, its sensitive soul to which it is united. But the flesh of man does not perish, because it is the matter of a form that is immortal, for such is the human soul: in this way does it always preserve, even in the midst of dissolution a germ of immortality in order to render itself equal to

its immortal form. Where, therefore, the flesh of brutes is changed into other substances and perish, the flesh of man, although dissolved by fire and scattered to ashes, although eaten as food, is not totally destroyed, it is not wholly transformed into another substance. God will recover that which He rendered indestructible and restore it to that soul which first reanimated it. What scenes the touch of the cold wand of death will unfold to us when the soul bursts the hampering ligaments of mortality! We can't stay or defer the breaking up of the mold that encases the soul, but the inspired words of St. Paul just now repeated reveal to us the restoration of this mold — the body.

RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT

Part I

Religious sentiment is natural to man. Scientific research has established its universality. Morality and religiosity are the attributes of the whole human kingdom. Research has been prosecuted amongst the most savage tribes with the result that everywhere there have been found authentic manifestations of religiosity, of morality.

There is in man an ineradicable need which expresses itself by adoration and veneration for an unknown object, but one that is foreseen as superior and necessary. He desires to salute this loved object with his lips, or rather with his heart, as the devout pagan used to kiss the images of the gods. Humanity has always worshiped, and rather than worship nothing it has bowed down to wood and stone.

In all epochs, amongst all peoples, amidst the barbarous as well as the civilized, in the splendor of progress as in the obscurity of barbarism, you will always find altars, sacrifice, prayer. Tribes have been found and are in existence to-day destitute not only of the elegancies, but of the most necessary arts of humanized existence, ignorant of letters and of laws, without ideas of property, of no fixed habitation, but

roaming wildly through the forest, but no tribe or people however barbarous has ever yet been discovered without some sort of religious belief. Man may forget arts, wisdom, civility, but never can he forget his religious tenets. "The Eskimo in his ice cave; the Indian under the leafy domes of his forests;" the Negro blackened on the sands by the sun of a fiery desert; the Malay isolated in his distant lands; the Scythian hunter roaming in the forest; the Zulu in his kraal; the head hunter in Borneo: in a word, "mankind of every period of his history, in every stage of his civilization, and in whatever part of the planet he may be discovered looks beyond the tomb and speaks of immortality. This sublime cry reaches us also from every druidical stone of Great Britain, from the blood-stained altars of paganism, from the withered lips of the mummies in their sarcophagi." Wherever are the footprints of man there, too, are the marks of religion. Pagan as well as Christian writers have always proclaimed religion, whether false or true, to be the foundation of human society. Zenophon says "that the most pious cities and nations have been the wisest and most lasting." Plutarch says, "That it is easier to build a city in the air than to constitute a society without belief in the gods." Rousseau observes, "that there never was a state formed without a religion serving as a foundation." Voltaire maintained, "That wherever there is a society religion is absolutely necessary." Numa made Rome a holy city that it might become eternal. When Cæsar on one occasion said something irreverent

against the gods, Cato and Cicero immediately reprimanded him. Fabricius, an officer in the Roman army, hearing that Cineas, a philosopher, mocked the divinity in the presence of Pyrrhus, said, "Would to the gods our enemies may follow this doctrine when at war with the Republic." The ancients believed that no city could be conquered unless first abandoned by the national gods. Woe to the city in which was heard that terrible voice which said, "The gods are abandoning us." There is, therefore, within us a secret voice that speaks from the lowest depths of our souls, and speaks to everyone that there is no one that has not a faith, a moral, a worship. We may hear isolated voices occasionally belching forth the horrid anathema of the nonexistence of the supernatural, but their voices are hushed to silence by the universal prayer of praise, adoration to a supreme Being.

How can we explain that man has a strong conviction of the existence of a spiritual world. How can we explain the fact that humanity from its origin has believed itself to possess the knowledge of the existence of a God. Man is the only being who has dreamt of and imagined a supernatural world, and who has made this idea the rule of his private and the basis of his public and social life. "Humanity goes to God, although sometimes that God is conceived after a superstitious fashion. This thirst for belief has often allayed itself at most impure sources. Man is convinced that there is not here below merely dead automatic matter, but that here is something living — indeed a living God. His gaze pierces the curtain of

matter which surrounds him; under his vesture of atoms he feels the pulsations of an immortal spirit. It would be truly astonishing had man from the beginning of his existence been pursuing a chimera. He would then be the only being in the world thus constituted." It is, therefore, revolting to think that after this life all is at an end for us.

We cannot use our moral or intellectual faculties without admitting that there is some tie, some relation, between us and our Creator; neither can we exercise them without admitting that this universe, so full of order and harmony as to demand our adoration and to excite our astonishment, is directed by the Providence of that Creator. No matter to what side we turn, no matter in what department we institute research, everywhere we are met with evidences, that all things are administered by a divine wisdom, and evidently for that being, who by the power of reason can convert all these things to his own use and pleasure. The dominion of the earth obviously resides in man. He stands upon the world erect, sublime, directing his gaze towards heaven as the domicile of his extraction, and capable of comprehending the power of God and the glory of His works. This stupendous exhibition of the universe has no interest for any other creature, interest alone for him who participates in the reason and intelligence of the Divinity, between them, therefore, there must be some relation.

If man exhibited nothing beyond the phenomena of mere vitality or instinct, we might suppose him to be subject to the same laws with the plant that lives,

and the brute that feels, but besides these he is gifted with powers the most diversified and astonishing, powers by which we can soar aloft to the prime Mover of all things and inundate Him with our love and benediction. It was not from blind chance that we are sprung, nor was it by fortuitous accident we were created. There is nothing true, or the human race is verily the master work of an agency omnipotent and all-wise. Nor did such a Creator generate man, and foster him tenderly, and bring him up with solicitude to a noble degree of perfection, that, when He had gloriously achieved His mighty labors, He left him to sink into the eternal misery of death and oblivion. If so, life would be a mockery. The stone, the plants, the brute beast have no necessity in thinking to exist. And why then should we have this privilege? We enjoy this privilege because it points to some elysium of rest, some port where we drop anchor after buffeting the tempests on the ocean of life. Without this harbor of safety, without this asylum, life would be a dreary and trackless desert. The gift of intelligence would be a useless gift, nay more, it would be a torture, and would only serve to point out our impotent misery when confronted with other things. We should envy the destiny of the beast, because the oxen draw the plow-share, the lark salutes the aurora with its warbling notes, they never suffer remorse for the past, nor have the anguish for the present, nor fear for the future, why then should man be continually haunted with these? Without the hope of happiness in a future life, more happiness could be

in a watermelon than in the head of a man endowed with reason. Now if there be a God who has given us life and who by His providence conserves us, our hearts ought to overflow with gratitude to Him. If there be a God who ordains good and prohibits bad, we must obey His sacrosanct laws. If there be a God who will call us some day to the tribunal of His eternal justice, ought we not labor to make amends for our trespasses? Ought we not make an oblation to Him of our mind, our heart, and our will? This oblation, this offering is what we call religion, and according to some is defined as the "compendium of relations that unite God to man, of the truths that bind the finite man with the Infinite. It is the law of morality. It is the dazzling splendor of worship, the sentiment of gratitude, the adoration of the creature to the Creator."

What would man be to-day without religion? He would be as one without a soul, a fetid corpse from the grave, a flower that is plucked and thrown on the wayside to wither under a burning sun. Byron, the poet, says, "a soul without religion is like a ship in a hurricane, or a man surrounded by a desert of sand. Its cry is the cry of one that is desolate, fatality is its god, heaven is a canopy of iron to which in vain ascend the lamentations of the soul, its voice is a mixture of imprecation, wailing and desperation that draws one to imbrute himself in the sordid sty of his passions and the other it leads to suicide."

From perverted intelligence arises perversion of heart. The infidel and sensualist often fly from the

light because it condemns them. In struggling against religious conviction most infidels think only of freeing their reason from mystery, their morals from restraint, and their conscience from remorse. Without religion the domestic hearth is a thing of horror, the nuptial couch without honor, husband and wife without fidelity, matrimony without sanctity, and the child without respect or obedience.

Without religion doubts and fears are hatched, and while in the progress of development become terrible and pungent. After a man doubts about a Deity he begins to doubt about himself. His virtue is lost, sweet dreams and suave hopes fly from a soul that has no faith, no religion. Then comes sadness and melancholy, the soul can taste no sweetness. The bloom and springtime of life are gone and faded. Pleasures wither and vanish before it as flowers in autumn, nullity and their skeletons are left. Nought now remains but the grave. Oh! but that cold grave very often chases away these illusions and endows the soul with the hope of an eternal life by waking in it the voice of God that lay there dreaming. However somber and narrow may be the inner valley of the human conscience there always remains, as the prophet says, a door of hope. "I will give him a door of hope in the valley of Acor." A powerful charm, a fascination which is sometimes sweet and sometimes terrible, leads the thinker and the scholar, and the poet eternally back to the supernatural. Renan with his hands crossed on his breast and his eyes closed in death asked himself in agony on what shore his soul

would be wrecked. Strauss, so proud and so convinced of his scientific nihilism, feeling death at hand, asked that the beautiful words of Phoedo on the immortality of the soul might be read to him. "As to those who feel the need of personal immortality, I refer them to Moses, the Prophets, and to Jesus Christ."

Voltaire used to say, "If you have only a market town to govern, it must have a religion." What would the peasant and the laborer do without belief in God, in the soul, in the future state, and without the religious sentiment? They would think only of what immediately concerned themselves; they would be guided only by their impulse instincts, and would soon fall back into a savage state. Nothing but practical religion is of any service in the moral education of man.

"All moral truths can be taught," wrote Paul Bert, "without having recourse to metaphysical obscurities and the thunders of Sinai." Such morality is the logical consequence of materialism. In fact if, as has been taught, thought is only the result of the gray matter of the brain, it follows that a man's act will depend solely on the condition of his brain, and, hence, can never be voluntary; from which it follows that there can be no responsibility, no merit, no future life, no immortal soul, and no supreme Judge. If this were the correct creed, crime would increase with frightful rapidity, because the criminal would have a right to maintain that if he is not a free agent, that instinct is his only guide, that he does not deserve punishment because he does not believe in God.

Morality without God is no morality, because in this hypothesis there can be no such thing as duty, since there is no one in authority to command. The consequences are manifest, man will follow the instincts of nature, he will be like a lamb if his instincts are kindly, and like a wild beast if they are cruel. Morality without God is no morality at all; having no dependence on any person or thing, it depends solely on caprice. We may take or leave what we like of it, according to our passions.

Why are the masses patient under social injustice, because their desires, their hopes have been anchored elsewhere. Convinced that this life is for them the herald of a better, that every suffering in its own way is a favor preparing for the patient man a munificent reward at the hands of the divine bounty, the masses ask but for little in this world, but destroy their faith, teach them that there is no future, that the present is the great everything, then a breath of corrupting lasciviousness will pass over his heart, and the wicked man will mercilessly overthrow every obstacle in his way to pleasure and gain.

Napoleon used to say "without religion men will kill one another for an apple or a pretty woman." Men who believe, before committing an evil deed, will hesitate. In getting rid of God philosophers of today snap the last tie that hold men to honor and honesty. Fear of the police may keep small criminals in order, but what influence can it have on those who hold in their hands the fate of the police and of the entire judicature. "Laws," says Montesquieu, "are

like spiders' webs, small flies are caught in them, but large ones break through."

"Let us lay the foundations of our morality in GOD, no nation has ever yet ventured to socialize atheism," said Robespierre. "Laws only control the arm, religion rules the heart," said Portalis. "The state has no longer any religion, and whatever humanitarians may say, this is a real misfortune for France, all the taverns in France put together are not worth one village church; for there the ills of life are forgotten, and hope is received with the HOST," declared Musset. "Let us learn to see things as they are, the true, the good, the ancient, the authoritative morality needs the Absolute, aspires to the transcendental, and finds mainstay in God alone. Conscience, like the heart, demands a future. Duty is nothing if not sublime, and life would be a comedy but for its relation to eternity," said Sherer. "Culture of intellect without religion in the heart, is only civilized barbarism, and disguised animalism," said Bunsen.

There is only one principle which can serve as a basis for our ideal of duty, and that is religion. If the moral law does not depend on an avenging God, man is as free as the wild beast in the jungle. No man would sacrifice himself for the sake of duty, if duty was a human institution. To accept the moral law then is to confess that it comes from the mind of God alone, that He alone can give expression to it in us through the voice of conscience, and it is subject to none but God.

Without religion our life would be a life of com-

mercial interests with fraud, of vanity with worldly recognition, of hatred with calumny, of envy with slander. A life in which all our passions would have their tickling incentives, all our appetites their rich pasturage, all our instincts their vent. Carnal, earthly and animal man would be glutted, and the Christian man starve. Eliminate religion from our life, and why should not poverty steal, why should not revenge for wrongs received, appeal to the dagger.

When, therefore, every curb to disorder is unchecked, every blush from the committal of heinous crimes is disregarded, all remorse removed from sin, all ties of social rule broken, human society must necessarily become dislocated, and the criminal code enforced to bring social machinery again into working order. Even with this enforcement, "without religion, in vain are the governed weak, the rulers strong, property fenced by acts of parliament; power, law, and influence, invested in its possessors: the whole is hollow and baseless; duty wants a motive, and action its healthfulness; the husk and the shell of the constitution are there, but its soul and its significance are forgotten, all things lose their meaning, and the life and vigor of the state become engulfed and swallowed up in the sands of an arid and barren formalism."

That social chaos inevitably follows on the denial of a future life is testified by the declarations made in Paris convention of 1795, immediately after the fall of Robespierre, by deputy Lacointre. He said: "A people which is without religion, without form of

worship, without churches or any form of public service, is also without a country, without national customs, and prepares future slavery for itself. Contempt for religion has been the agent in bringing ruin upon the great Empire, and similar fate is in store for every nation whose code of laws is not based on the immutable foundation of morality and religion."

When faith goes out, and negation or skepticism comes in, evil must abound and accumulate, because there is nothing to withstand it, nothing to amend it. There is no elysium to attract it, no Tartarus to terrify.

If this world of ours is a thing of chance, owning no God but force, no laws but those of matter, then morality, duty, faith, become words of vague import, and are accordingly discarded. Morality is no more than the palate by whose smack we judge of the utility and the inutility of our actions.

Open hatred of God has been stated to be the most striking characteristic of the present day, certainly it cannot be denied that a terrible stream of impiety is coursing through the different strata of society. It is lamentable to witness the unblushing audacity with which society at large publicly parades in politics, in science, in the press, and in daily life, the fact of its apostasy from God. This is the mournful result of intellectual error and moral depravity. Since the commencement of the last century unbelief has advanced with rapid strides. We find it in the palace as well as in the lowly hut, it influences the highest minister of the state and the ragged urchin who shouts

in the rear of a popular demonstration. A great evil and strange perturbation torment society to-day. This evil is the fountain of many others, and this perturbation ends in producing chaos and confusion in our ideas, manners, and customs, by undermining society. I mean the diminishing of a truth, a truth above all others, namely, of religious belief. The history of the world, of its revolutions, of its errors, and of its conquests is nothing but a war against religion. Science no longer wishes to recognize religion, nay more, with a brazen front it dares to say that religion acts as a brake upon the chariot of enlightenment, that it clogs the wheel of progress. Literature ostracizes it. History effaces it from its pages. The symbol of the Crucified, in order that it may become a thing of the past, is removed from the schoolroom, from the hospital, and even from the domestic hearth. Notice is written upon the door that religion is a trespasser. Thus does atheism, without shame, stand forth in the light of noonday denuded of all argument, not even a shred, and with wanton effrontery endeavors to corrupt and rob humanity of its inherent purity of belief in God. It is this false teaching that is crushing and desolating the heart of man.

From where and to whom are we to look for a saviour to remedy this state of things? Who will purify this muddy stream? Only Him who succeeded in freeing the world from heathen spells, Jesus Christ and His Gospel. As He swept away those false divinities to which the whole heathen world bent the knee in the days of ancient paganism, so will His

church sweep away the idols of materialism, agnosticism, and sensualism that the world to-day is bowed before in profound adoration. See to it, that religion prospers in your families, foster that religion which alone can make happy fathers, exemplary mothers, virtuous and affectionate children, good and useful citizens.

RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT

Part II

General Washington called religion and morality the "two great pillars of human happiness," and the "firmest props of the duties of men and citizens," that reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. Therefore, to swerve from religion is to endanger the life of a nation.

Survey the state of society to-day, and it won't require a very acute mind to see into what depths we could fall if the hand of religion was removed from supporting us, without it there is no honesty in the mart, nor would there be justice in the tribunal. Without honesty and justice to pilot us we see trusts suspected of commercial tyranny, and the tribunals appointed to investigate the causes of the disease become tainted with the disease and unveil their own venality, the virus was contagious and they are spattered all over with the fetid pus, dissolution sets in and companies dissolve, and both promoters and venal legislators curse from behind prison bars.

If a nation ignores God, ceases to worship Him, laughs at His laws, the horizon of that nation instead of being succeeded by a splendor of meridian bril-

liancy, it will become retrograde, and dissolve into a terrifying darkness. Suppose all the people of the United States were atheists, the poor would be fools if they would not murder you to have your property. Their minds would be ever active to elude the policeman. Everyone would be a burglar, if an opportunity presented itself where he could escape the meshes of the law, he would appropriate his neighbors' money.

Can the state govern society without religion? Is temporal power strong enough to repress opposition from a people who have no religion, a people who make the senses and earthly enjoyment the end of all knowledge, so that matter becomes at once the source, the means, and the end of all philosophy. I say emphatically no. Civilization may polish the surface of society, but it requires a stronger and a holier principle to restrain its corruptions. If you teach a people to ignore God; if you teach a people that there is no hereafter, and that the present is the end of all things; that morality, duty, faith are words of vague import; that morality is the palate by whose smack we judge of the utility or the inutility of actions; that this world of ours is a thing of chance; to force and matter all things are reducible, that nature is the ever active principle that energizes everything; if this be the gospel of the state, then justice and judgment will be swallowed up in the blind gulfs of sensualism, and we would be living on the thin crust of a moral earthquake, a crust that would soon crack and cause a social overthrow. This is a gospel that the mind of man would easily

embrace, because it removes all moral check and restraint from the indulgence of our lower passions.

Theologians teach that law is a moral rule existing in the mind, but there is no mind, no intelligence, nor will in nature, therefore it could not be the seat of those laws. Material things are passive in the hands of God, as they are passive in the hands of man. It is their nature to be passive, and to move as they are moved. All motion has its origin in the will of some spiritual being; no other explanation of its existence is possible. God is the Prime Mover of all things. The law of movement is in God; the order and measure of that movement is in the unconscious creature. Now when we look no higher than nature for the laws that give order, regularity, measure, and mutual dependence to its elements we ascribe to that insensible nature what belongs to God. When we ascribe laws to material nature, we transfer the exalted honor of law, the attribute of intelligence, from God to unconscious matter. When, therefore, a people is inoculated with this materialistic doctrine, when religion is eradicated from the mind, and unbelief holds its place, if man is devolved from a piece of carbon combined with other ingredients, if man sprung from the earth as a grain of wheat develops after it is placed in the ground by the sower, if man's highest ideals are no more than the sublimated mud of a protoplasm, if religion is only a bugbear to frighten women and children, if such doctrines were accepted by the masses, then the awful truth would appear in hell fire, life would become unbearable and the unguent that soothes deep grief and

sorest trials could no longer exist. A blight-producing plague must visit a people where this drivel of pretending science takes root which is no more than a clumsy hypothesis. Skepticism, irreverence, indifference must grip the minds of the youth when they hear such doctrines by those votaries of natural science, and pave the way for more brutalizing effects than the basest theogonies of ancient paganism. If the masses professed such a creed, liberty, bravery, courage, and everything noble in man, purity, devotedness, and elevation of spirit in women would be substituted by debauchery, brutality, and crime. This is a natural consequence. Because if there be no God, no responsibility, no spirituality, no hereafter, if man be only an expanded protoplasm, why should we attach any blame to our fellowmen for squeezing as much pleasure out of life as they possibly can, why should they not indulge in criminal lusts which give them the most pleasure. Such belief would make society a swine trough, and human barriers would be insufficient to govern the people.

I will now appeal to English and French history for facts to substantiate this truth, that the decay of faith is accompanied with the decay of morals and rectitude, and when this decay is set in the people become ungovernable. I will quote two unquestionable authorities with reference to religious sentiment in England during the nineteenth century. Gregg says in his work "Rocks Ahead," "Very large proportion, probably the majority, of the operative class in towns, are total unbelievers; and these are not the

reckless and disreputable, but, on the contrary, consist of the best of the skilled workmen, the most instructed and thoughtful, as well as the steadiest. The hard-headed, industrious engineers and foremen, the members of mechanics' institutes, the natural leaders of the artisans, are skeptics intellectually, not morally; they disbelieve because they have inquired, argued and observed, and have not been able to obtain from their Methodist fellow-workmen, or even from their ministers of the gospel, satisfactory answers to their doubts. Among manufacturing artisans and the highest description of citizen laborer, it may be stated, with even more confidence than of the ranks above them in the social scale, that the intellect of this body is already divorced from the prevalent creeds of the country. The range and form of this skepticism varies widely in the different classes. Among workingmen it is for the most part absolutely atheism, and is complicated by a marked feeling of antagonism towards the teachers of religion, a kind of resentment growing out of the conviction that they have been systematically deluded by those who ought to have enlightened them. Thinkers of the higher order among the educated classes, and more especially scientific men, by no means as a rule, go so far as this, but content themselves with pronouncing God to be unknowable, and His existence unprovable; the distinctive doctrines of Christianity, and the details of its historical basis, neither made out nor in any way admissible, and a future life to be a matter of mere speculation, which may or may not be in store for us,

but as to which no rational man would dare to dogmatize. Literary men and scholars are often skeptical merely as to special creeds, though sincerely and deeply religious in tone and temperament. But all concur in repudiating existing forms of Christianity; that is, the common religion of the nation, the Jehovah of the Bible, the hell and heaven of the divines and priests, the resurrection of the gospels, and the salvation — formulas and creeds of churches."

A writer in the magazine, *The Month,* says, "The advance of infidelity among a large portion of the generation now entering or having entered upon the full enjoyment and use of life, has reached the line at which even morality becomes a sentiment rather than a law; conscience a phenomenon rather than the voice of God sitting in judgment; free-will and responsibility an imagination; the universe a physical system self-evolved and self-regulated; the soul of man mechanism; the future of man a blank; sin, original and actual, a fiction; atonement an impossible superstition." Now what was the condition of England during this time? I will quote an extract from a speech of the Bishop of Salford which I find in a lecture of Archbishop Vaughan: "During the five years ending 1824 there were 65,000 cases of crime recorded; but during a like period ending 1874 there were no less than 408,000 of such cases; or, in other words, crime had increased sixfold during the last half century, while the population had but doubled. Taking more recent dates, say from 1860 to 1874 assault had increased 36 per cent., breaches of peace

124 per cent.; damage to property 69 per cent.; misdemeanor 37 per cent.; prostitution 36 per cent.; desertion of families 75 per cent.; larceny 64 per cent.; drunkenness 110 per cent.; people having no visible means of support 73 per cent., and all this while population has only increased 18 per cent." Such was the moral and spiritual corruption of man.

When impiety sharpened her tongue against God in that awful tempest which howled at the close of the eighteenth century in France, and which was a scourge sent forth by an offended Deity to chastise and purify a wicked people, we have an incontestable proof that it is futile to attempt to govern a people from whose minds belief in God has been obliterated.

France having reached the summit of prosperity and glory under the paternal government of a long succession of good monarchs, she at length grew weary of her happiness and fidelity. She lent too credulous an ear to false prophets and seducers. Fashionable unbelief and the easy morals of the splendid age of Louis the XIV produced a luxuriant crop of authors who perpetuated their errors in writings remarkable for attractive grace and classic elegance of style. Materialistic philosophers, encouraged by the debauchery of a depraved court, proceeded fearlessly to carry out their designs by outraging religion and undermining the principles of faith and morals; of such men were Bayle, Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, Rousseau, all working each in his own way for the utter annihilation of religion. It was Diderot who said, that if he were in need of a rope to hang the

last king, he would make it out of the entrails of the last priest. In these very words of Diderot we hear the portentous rumblings of that approaching earthquake which soon upheaved both altar and throne and overthrew the most sacred institutions of France in chaotic ruin.

A new generation of scholars educated under such masters, and having hardly any religious knowledge, and certainly destitute of all religious habit and devotional feeling, had gone forth from the colleges to become active members of society. By their teaching truth had been crushed out of men's minds to give room to rationalistic philosophy, and to unfounded prejudices, accordingly the impiety which had hitherto been confined to the inhabitants of the city, began to find its way into the provinces, and to permeate the rural populations; the consequence was, loyalty to God became a subject of derisive mockery.

The principles of negation continued more and more to develop themselves in a thousand different channels ramifying from the same source, till they had become absorbed in that general abandonment of belief, to which the way had already been paved by a coextensive corruption of morality. The lower classes had no hope of betterment from the iron rule of their materialistic rulers, and their own belief leaving them destitute of any divine help, unrayed upon by the faintest glimmer of faith, and unwarmed by the least scintillation from the high altar of heaven, dashed with wild fury into the most abominable excesses. Recognizing no rights in others, and out-

raging what every honest man held to be sacred, they pretended they were desirous of making all equal, when their only purpose was to bend the necks of others beneath their own yoke. The promised liberty and equality were nowhere to be found except on the battlefield, on the scaffold and in the grave; and the boasted fraternity, which was to bind all mankind in one common family, consisted in a bond of common hatred of all the human race except themselves.

Perversion of morals follows the perversion of the intellect. Vice and virtue were ascertained to be mere conventionalisms, they were the hallowed names of Utility and Inutility. Whatever is virtuous is only so because it is useful, everything else is imposture and fabrication. With this gospel to guide the people naturally a deep and inveterate corruption developed itself in all ranks of society, from the throne to the cottage. The immoral life of the king lowered the standards of the age, and exhibited in his person an example of unfeeling selfishness and unblushing debauchery. So notorious was his debauchery, that upon one occasion, when some children had been kidnaped from Paris, a rumor was circulated that they had been carried away to furnish materials for a bath of human blood to the monarch, in order to invigorate his body wasted by excesses. The morals of the nobility also partook of the general taint. The French literature of the period was extremely licentious. The leading writers in France, just before the revolution, appear to have been almost studiously anxious to scatter indelicacies through their

pages. Life was like an enchanted vision, but behind the deceptive scene the guillotine was silent rearing its bloody head. God was forgotten, a film covered the wounds of the state, giving the appearance of health, while corruption was spreading unseen. Infidelity seated at the tables of the rich proclaimed a glorious advent was nigh when the miseries of humanity would disappear. It was in this den and glitter of prostitution that liberty was nurtured in France, and it could not have a cradle more impure. In blood was the tree of liberty planted. It grew, watered by the tears of misery, its fruits were full of rottenness, whilst its leaves shed pestilence and death all around.

The press poisoned the public mind by attributing every motive that was malicious and degrading to the then governing power in the state, it pandered to the passions and thirst of the mob for human blood. Mirabeau held that the Catholic Church and freedom were mutually incompatible; away then with the Church! Triellard asserted that the convent was the abode of tyranny, the prison of sorrowing hearts suffering in silence; away then with the priests! Monarchy was merely a form consisting of one supreme head, and a privileged class to protect him from the mob who paid taxes to support him; away then with the Monarchy! The privileged class living sumptuously, felt not the soul-piercing cry of tyranny, nor the maddening famine and wretchedness of the starving wife and little ones, and the thousand and one agonizing scourges of the poor, moreover it lived in

an atmosphere of unreined licentiousness; away therefore with the privileged class! The cauldron of crime and corruption was increasing in temperature by each fresh application of inflammable matter, and only awaited something more to be added to boil over. On the ninth of August, 1792, the signal was given by the bells from their steeples pealing their death-knell notes. What a fearful night. It was a carnival of crime, outlawry and butchery, and yells of exultant joy hailed this wide-spread carnage. Horrible the hour when man's soul in its paroxysm of rage spurns asunder the barriers of righteousness. Bolts jingle and prison doors are burst open, the priests are dragged from their homes and hurled from their cells to be hewn asunder; corpses pile one upon another, and the gutters run red with blood. Oh, what a fearful night, listen to the yells of men and the shrieks of women, yells wearying down to low growls; the brave are not spared, nor the beautiful, nor the weak. When morning dawned, the palace of the King was surrounded by a lawless mob, the King was seized and rushed to prison and afterwards beheaded. The massacre continued for three days while about five thousand victims sank beneath its violence. The savage passions of these men overpowered every principle of reason and humanity, and while glorying in having destroyed the fetters of despotism, they proved themselves to be the abject slaves of sin, cruelty and corruption.

The torrent of the revolution commenced to swell. Brutal armies swept like demons of destruction over

hill and dale trampling the harvests of the husbandman, burning villages, bombarding cities, and throwing shot and shells into nurseries where mothers, maidens, and infants, cowered in the agony of terror. Christianity was declared to be of a purely human invention; accordingly by the decree of 1792 universal toleration was granted to every form of worship except Christianity; the churches were then profaned, pillaged, and turned into temples of reason. The existence of God was publicly denied; the Sabbath was abolished, and every tenth day was named for the purpose of relaxation and festivity. The last resting place of the dead was violated, and a notice was placed at the entrance bearing this inscription "Death is but a perpetual sleep." It was thus impiously hoped that the very name of Christianity, would, in time, be blotted from the remembrance of the nations of the earth. As the revolution proceeded, atheism and irreligion assumed a bolder front. The bells of the churches were melted into cannon; the spires of the churches were in many cases leveled, because they violated the republican principle of equality, by rising above other edifices. The sacred vessels were melted down and coined into money to replenish the national treasury; the crosses were wrenched from their places and thrown into the river while infidelity wagged its head in exultation, and shrieked aloud, lo! see how Christianity passeth away. "It is not enough to destroy the body, but let us crush the wretch," meaning Jesus Christ.

The crowning exhibition of impiety was still to fol-

low. Two miserable men named Chaumette and Herbert, members of the municipality of Paris, one day at the head of a procession, to which history has no parallel, waited on the convention. A number of young females walked before another female mysteriously veiled and clothed in azure garments. This personage having been led forward with great ceremony, Chaumette announced to the assembly that the time had arrived when men should cease to fear a supreme Being, and he now introduced in the goddess of reason, an object more worthy of their homage, "Fall, O veil of Reason, before this venerable assembly"; as he uttered these words, he drew aside the veil, and revealed to their gaze the features of a woman of infamous character. The Goddess of Reason was embraced by the President and afterwards conducted to the ancient cathedral of Notre Dame and placed upon the altar with the crucifix under her feet, and there enthroned as the object of national worship. Amidst this wild scene of disorder and drunken licentiousness an unknown voice exclaimed aloud, "O God, Thou wilt yet be avenged."

The divine vengeance most justly fell on the perpetrators of this fearful insult to the majesty of heaven, and vindicated the wisdom of God's government, and proves how sin becomes the instrument of its own punishment. Crime must find an inevitable meed not to be explained but on the principle of divine retribution. There never was an age in the history of the world in which retributive justice was so swift to overtake the authors of crime as this, and the most

remarkable feature of their downfall and punishment is that these were brought about by the same agents that had contributed to their elevation.

The constitutional and monarchial party first fell. The Girondists, who had brought about that fall, next perished. The anarchial faction, too, after an apparent victory over all its opponents, shared in the dreadful rite. The impious promoters of the goddess of reason tasted the bitter consequences of their crimes. The Duke of Orleans, who sat in the convention under the name of Phillip of Equality was beheaded, on the sixth of November, 1793. Marat was stabbed by a young maid while in his bath. Danton, who rushed many to death without a trial, was condemned without a hearing; he fell by the iniquitous tribunal which he himself had formed. Robespierre, who was styled "The envoy of God" was among the last of the victims, as he was lead to prison, the mob howling like dogs from hell, a woman sprang on the car which conveyed him to the guillotine, and, waving her hand over him exclaimed, "Murderer of my kindred, thy death makes me rejoice, descend to the grave, laden with the reproaches of every wife and mother of France." One of the guards looking at the miserable man exclaimed with emotion, "Yes, Robespierre, there is a God." Upon the fall of the instrument of death, a shout of exultation was raised by the spectators, a shout that reëchoed all over France. Misery rolled like a torrent all over France. Noble and peasant, the virtuous and the vicious, the learned and the unlearned were dragged to the guillo-

tine like cattle to the shambles. After the execution of Robespierre, Lacointre ascending the tribune of the hall of the convention, courageously exclaimed "that a people without a religion, without a worship, and without a church, is a people without a country, and without a morality, destined eventually to sink to a condition of slaves, that contempt of religion had been the ruin of the French Monarchy, and would be the ruin of every people whose legislation is not founded on the unchangeable principles of morality and religion." Where, therefore, are there in history stronger facts than those presented to us by the French revolution, to prove to us, that civil authority in rebelling against religion forfeits its strongest safeguard against the rebellion of its own subjects. The normal condition of Christian society is that religion and the State be intimately united, that each shall use its appropriate weapons against turbulence and license. But if the two powers are in a state of not mutual harmony, but of mutual distrust, turbulence and license must be expected to assume fearful proportions. Reverence, therefore, is the civil ruler's greatest security for the stability of his power.

RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT

Part III

Everything around us is an eloquent sermon of the presence of the Deity, from the drop of water which refreshes organic nature to the great ocean which reflects back the sunlight sheen of the midnight stars in grandeur and loveliness, from the pure pale leaves that sip the dew to the majestic forest tree, each and all form a school where the reflective minds of men have grand lessons to learn of their omnipotent Creator. And the more we labor with the chemist in his cell, the deeper we descend with the geologist through the strata of the earth, the higher we ascend with the astronomer, the stronger do we forge the chain that binds us to our Creator. But man being an intelligent being expresses his relationship not like the tongueless flower, but in a manner becoming his position among created beings; he voices his recognition of his Infinite Maker in the form of a ritual worship which we call religion.

Around the altar of sacrifice in sublime acts of adoration we acknowledge the supreme dominion of the Deity over us, and our total dependence upon Him, and there in those sweet communings we hear the echoes of those unspeakable moanings and songs of

exile reverberating from the abode of our Eternal Father.

The mind of man is like a fluctuating sea, never at rest, even success the most unbounded does not satisfy it, man weeps for more worlds to conquer. Amid this tumult of the mind, this everlasting restlessness of the soul, Faith, benign visitor, descends to man; it comes to him in radiant and alluring form, and addresses him in accents of winning tenderness. Receive me and I will say to the swelling surges of passion, peace be still. Receive me and I will quell the fever of disappointment by leading you to the fountains of living waters, from which when you drink you will thirst no longer. Receive me and I will lead you to an object of pursuit worthy of your origin, worthy of your nature, worthy of those inward springs of which you are proudly and painfully conscious; the object to which I will direct you is the Infinite.

And do we not see this truth exemplified in the lives of those who adore and love their God, are they not frequently filled in this house of their pilgrimage, with prelibations of pure blessedness? Yes! religion lets in a ray of the most cheering light upon the darkness of the mind. He who was before a destitute wanderer in the inhospitable desert has now gained a shelter from the bitter and inclement blast of a cold and shelterless world. He has found a supreme Being to whom he can unbosom his sorrows, and from whom he can look for relief. In our worldly pursuits we are ever in dread of a cessation of hope, expecta-

tion, and effort, but when imbued with religion, we fear not if our hopes are counted by our disappointments, for we look farther than the boundary of what is limited. If your heart bleeds from some wound of recent misfortune, nothing is of equal efficacy with religious comfort, it has power to enlighten the darkest hour of life, to assuage the severest woes. Its grandest ornament is charity, it inculcates nothing but love and sympathy of affection. It is that invaluable gem that shines brightest in adversity. When the cheerless hand of sorrow is placed upon our brow it solaces us, its magic influence calms the ruffled senses of life, and makes them glide peacefully away. Oh! sweet religion thou dost smooth the mind in its last hours; it removes the sharp sting of death, and gives assurances of the passport of the soul to an endless life of happiness and bliss.

When the French revolution dethroned the God of heaven, and a god molded from the clay of passion usurped His place, the lower ranks were sunk in the deepest irreligion and the grossest sensuality. The deification of man oppressed and degraded more and more the unregenerate. These were days when blasphemous social apostasy from God and virtue recalled the wildest times of paganism. Here the most brutal indifference to all religious sentiment was manifest, here vice appeared in all its hideous turpitude, here the family ties were disregarded, here all the impious and anarchial secret societies were incessantly warring against social order, but what a change suddenly takes place in these slums of iniquity owing

to the fact that a few lay students founded a society under the patronage of St. Vincent de Paul, and bound themselves to visit these hovels of crime and effect a moral reform of these families, and after revealing to their benighted understanding the truths of religion, they lifted them out of the depths of moral destitution.

It is religion that makes life a discipline of goodness, creates new hopes when all earthly ones vanish. It is religion that calls up beauty and divinity from corruption and decay. It is religion that makes an instrument of torture and shame the ladder of ascent to imperishable joy. It is religion that above all combinations of earthly beauty, calls up the most delightful visions, the gardens of the blessed, the security of everlasting joys, where the skeptic and the sensualist view only gloom, decay and annihilation. Yes! religion enters the hut of the poor and sits down with them and teaches them contentment in the midst of privation. It walks through cities, and amid all their pomp and grandeur, their towering pride and unutterable misery, becomes a purifying, ennobling, and redeeming angel. Religion adds dignity to the noble, gives wisdom to the wise, and new grace to the beautiful.

No wonder genius has raised to its honor imperishable monuments. The lawgiver bases the stability of his laws upon it. The inflexible logic of its apologists chases the owlet of atheism from its dark hiding-place. Orators with resistless eloquence celebrate its triumphs. Poets have consecrated to it their

heaven-taught lyres. Music's golden tongue tunes her sweetest melodies when her theme is something supernatural, and by them recall the songs and harmonies of heaven. The chemist, the astronomer, the geologist have built up impregnable fortresses to protect her truths. Sculptors give life to the unhewn stone and cold marble, and painters almost breathe a living soul into canvas, and thereby hand down to posterity the glories and heroes of religion. Architecture plans magnificent cathedrals, real poems in stone, where her children assemble to adore their God and sing His praises.

> "There is but one, I know,
> That all my hourly, endless wants can meet;
> Can shield from harm, recall my wandering feet;
> My God, thy hand can feed
> And day by day can lead
> Where the sweet dreams of peace and safety flow."

What motive sustains the Sister of Mercy in her life-long attendance in the hospital? What is the incentive that urges the Sister of St. Vincent de Paul in her unremitting care of the orphan and foundling? Why do the Little Sisters of the Poor quest for food and raiment for the aged and helpless, console the weeping and the afflicted and dry the tears of the distressed? It is alone for Him whose image they bear. Upon whose breast could they repose their aching hearts if God was not there? It is here the unbeliever is forced to halt and stand in wondering admiration at these devoted souls as they minister to his fellowman. Women who shear themselves of all the bril-

liancy and gayety of the world, who cut adrift every possible bond that could bind them to earthly pleasures; women who throw aside the world's winsome livery of tinsel and glitter, and robe themselves in a coarse garment; women of refinement, social rank and beauty, sweet and amiable in character, sever themselves from all friends and worldly friendship, see them in all countries among men whom infirmities and vice have reduced to objects of loathing and disgust, not engaged alone in softening the pain of their ulcerous sores, but breathing into their very souls the language of heaven to soothe its deep and rankling wounds. And what is the cause of these sacrifices; why destroy oneself for love of mankind, why raise the edifice of love on the ruins of self-love, why build an altar for the immolation of their own interests, is it for the love of their fellowman alone? Certainly not, these actions are moved by a higher motive than mere philanthrophy, it is charity, it is religion, it is God alone that could inspire such holy work. He who said, "That which thou doest unto the least of these my brethren, thou doest unto me."

When the soul of an unbeliever looks into the grave and gazes on the remains of his child whom he loved on earth, who can pencil the martyrdom of that father's mind as he beholds the lips conglutinated in the slime of dissolution, the eyes that once laughed now sunk in eternal night? Every lineament steeped in the noisome mildew of the grave meets his eye as he bends over the wreck of all his cherished hopes. He gazes and gazes on the figure of his child

now lapsing with awful rapidity into decay, he wrings his hands in despair and cries out, "Where art thou, my child?" He listens, but no echo of an answer reaches him from the dark shore beyond. He closes his eyes that he might not again look upon the revelations of that charnel house and breaks away in frantic paroxysms of despair. Ah! what a different scene for those whose souls are sanctified with religion, whose minds are raised above that grave, and looking towards heaven peer into the future. With those souls between religion and death there exists a harmonious relation. Gradually as the soul approaches the tomb a faint light raises and dissipates the darkness of error and fear as a mist is driven away before the rays of the morning sun. It yearns that the fetters which chained it to the body would be shaken off, and free from the clutch of death it could fly to the embrace of God. Philosophers and atheists who lived denying the existence of God and scoffed at religion, were heard to exclaim in their plaintive agony their belief in and express longings for the solace and comfort of religion. The voice of the Deity sounded in their ears as the trumpet of the angel of death blew its thrilling notes. Is it not a comfort to think that even then when the book of life is about to be closed error and prejudice are erased from its leaves, and God descends to soothe and comfort, and soften the pain of the dying, to cheer and console them, rays of light streak their way from heaven, drive away the gruesome night of

sin and falsehood, and light up the soul on its way to eternity?

Here is a fitting place to introduce the memorable words of Napoleon on this very subject. "Upon the throne surrounded by Generals far from being devout, — yes, I will not deny it — I had too much regard for public opinion, and far too much timidity. I did not dare to say aloud, I am a believer. But even then, if anyone had questioned me directly, I should have replied, 'Yes, I am a believer. I am a Christian'; and if it had been necessary to profess my faith at the cost of martyrdom, I should have found firmness. Yes, I should have endured it rather than deny my religion. But I am now here, all alone, why should I dissemble that which I believe at the bottom of my heart? Here I am for myself. I wish a priest. I desire the communion and to confess what I believe. I will go to Mass. . . . Divine effects compel me to believe in a divine cause. There exists an infinite being compared with whom, you, General Bertrand, are but an atom, and I with all my genius, truly nothing. I perceive God. I have need of Him. I believe in Him. If you do not, so much the worse for you. I can pardon many things, but I have a horror of an atheist or a materialist. Think you I can have any sympathy with one who does not believe in the existence of the soul, who believes he is a lump of clay, and who wishes that I may be like him, a lump of clay also? I know men, and I tell you, General Bertrand, Jesus Christ was not a man. Super-

ficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires, and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. There is between Christianity and every other religion the distance of infinity. I see in Lycurgus, Numa, Mahomet, only legislators, but I see nothing that reveals divinity. I recognize the gods and these great men as beings like myself. There are numerous resemblances, passions, errors which ally them to me and humanity. It is not so with Christ. Everything in Him astonishes me. His spirit overawes and His will confounds me. Between Him and everyone else there is no possible comparison. He is truly a Being by Himself. His birth and the history of His life, the profundity of His doctrine, His Gospel, His apparition, His march across the ages and realms, all are to me a prodigy, mystery insoluble, a mystery I cannot explain. In every other existence but that of Christ how many imperfections, where is the individual who has not been vanquished by obstacles, who has not been governed by circumstances, who has never compounded with any customs or passions save Christ! From the first to the last He is the same, always majestic and simple, infinitely firm and infinitely gentle.

"His religion is a revelation from an intelligence which is certainly not that of man. Jesus borrowed nothing from our sciences. One can find absolutely nowhere but in Him alone the example of His life. You may speak of Cæsar, Alexander, and their conquests, and of the enthusiasm they enkindled in their followers, but can you conceive of a dead man making

conquests with an army faithful and utterly devoted to His memory? My armies have forgotten me, even while living, as the Carthaginians forgot Hannibal. A single battle crushes us and adversity scatters our friends. Can you conceive of Cæsar from the depths of his mausoleum governing the empire, and watching over the destinies of Rome? But such is the power of the God of the Christians. Such is the perpetual miracle of the progress of the faith. Nations pass away, thrones crumble, but Christ remains, His church remains. What then is this power which has protected the church? Where is the arm which for eighteen hundred years has shielded it from so many storms that threatened to engulf it? What a proof of the divinity of Christ that, with an empire so large, so absolute He has but one end — the spiritual amelioration of individuals, the purity of conscience, the holiness of the soul; He lights up the flame of a love which consumes self-love — Charity — which prevails over every other passion. Now that I am chained to this rock, who fights and wins empires for me, where are my friends? Such is the fate of great men. So with Cæsar, so with Alexander, and I too. The name of a conqueror becomes a college theme; our exploits are tasks given to pupils by their teachers, who sit in judgment awarding us blame or praise. Behold the destiny, near at hand, of the Great Napoleon. What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal reign of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved, adored, and which is extending over all the earth."

On the fifteenth day of June, 1801, a Concordat was signed with the Pope and in an eloquent proclamation Napoleon announced the fact to the French people, declaring that "an insane policy has sought, during the Revolution, to smother religious sentiment under the ruins of the altar, under the ashes of religion itself. At its voice all those pious solemnities ceased in which citizens called each other by the endearing name of brother, and acknowledged their equality in the sight of heaven. The dying, left alone in their agonies, no longer heard that consoling voice which calls the Christian to a better world. God Himself seemed exiled from the face of nature. Let the morality so pure, so brotherly, you profess unite you all in love for country and respect for its laws, and above all, never permit disputes on doctrinal points to weaken that universal charity which religion inculcates and commands."

CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

Christ was born during the reign of Augustus Cæsar. The Augustan era was a classical age when man's intellect shone with dazzling splendor. Previous to this, and in those days there were matchless philosophers, historians, orators and poets. It was an age of gigantic vices as well as gigantic intellects. The searchlight of the Nazarene's gospel had not yet been turned on the wide territory enveloped in pagan darkness,— the darkest night of idolatry still prevailed. The colossal minds of the great philosophers of these days were still groping their way in search of some solution to explain the great enigma of life. One of the seven wise men of Greece said, "Learn to know thyself." The saying was so prized by the other philosophers, and received with such unbounded applause that each made it the object of his profound research, believing it to be the foundation of all moral philosophy. But while some with haughty flattery elevated him to the throne of a divinity, others by vituperative abasement lowered him to the position of brutes. While some placed in his breast a spark from heaven in lieu of a soul, others said his soul was an electric atom of earth. While some recognized him as the outcome of some whimsical clash of chance, others maintained him to be an organic frac-

tion of the universe. When, even, Plato forgot for a moment some of his speculations and defined man to be a two-legged animal without feathers, Diogenes, a cynic of those days, one day presented to him his man in the shape of a plucked fowl. This was the way the philosophers of old philosophized on human nature, either by flattering man's vanity, or insulting his miseries.

Should we blame these great minds of old for this wrangling among themselves when attempting to solve the great problem, man? Certainly not, because man's own character presents a great difficulty to those who wish to study him; he is an enigma that cannot be solved by the most clear-sighted intellect. There is a deity in marine mythology called Proteus which has the peculiar characteristic of changing its natural form at every instant; well, man is a second Proteus, for he is continually changing his natural disposition into different shapes and forms so as to frustrate every one of those who attempt to analyze him. Sometimes we see in him a luminous trace indicating an original greatness and an immortal destiny, at another time a brutal instinct degrades him and he sinks to the lowest depths. From one part he manifests a mind of most noble thought, a heart capable of the sublimest affection, a desire full of hunger for unearthly things, a soul boundless, greater than all the goods of the earth. But on the other hand what object is there that cannot mold him as a piece of wax, or make him the puppet of each passing passion? A mere nothing draws him and repulses him, a mere

nothing encourages him and deters him, a mere nothing cheers him and depresses him, a mere nothing consoles him and afflicts him. Each impulse makes him more fragile than a flying feather, more flexible than the reed agitated by the wind. This continual alternating of contrary tendencies raises him and depresses him, misfortune dismays him and he sinks into despondency, he pays homage to virtue and he abandons himself to vice, miserable and vain, weak and presumptuous, master and slave of oneself he is a mysterious mixture of light and darkness, of body and spirit, of vileness and greatness; accordingly this being, man, who by the vastness of his desires seems greater than all things created becomes by the frivolity of his attachments the most mean of all things.

With such contradictory dispositions we must not wonder at even the gigantic intellects of the ancient philosophers clashing with each other and their efforts being abortive, their attempts futile, to solve the nature of man. And as man must have an idol to adore we must not feel surprised that the whole world sank in an idolatrous religion when the dull light of reason, unguided, was left to itself to define the great question of man's origin and destination. This religious idolatry was bound up with the most ennobling recollections, consecrated by patriotism, eulogized by eloquence, sanctified by philosophy, and embalmed by poetry. The empire of paganism with its queenly capital, Rome, was the cesspool into which were discharged the villanies of the whole world, where every form of superstition no matter how profligate could

celebrate its mysteries with impunity. Everything in public and private life, domestic and rural economy, the days of the week, the months and seasons of the year, springs, rivers, groves and mountains were under the tutelage of the gods, and the necessity of this tutelage was sedulously impressed upon the mind of the people. Every street and forum was studded with shrines and altars and thronged with sorcerers and charlatans. The inferior and slave castes were held in profound ignorance by a hardened and selfish ascendency who kept within their narrow circle the monopoly of all knowledge and of all power. Owing, however, to the teaching of great men like Plato and Socrates the keen sighted and inquisitive of the democracy commenced to see the absurdities of polytheism, and hear the echoes of skepticism from the wrangling of the schools. Plato said "to know man" we had need of a superhuman master. He alone could unravel the tangled skein of his strange contradictions. In those words we obtain a glimpse of those streaks of the brightening dawn that presage the glowing day of truth. If some men in those days by the aid of reason recognized maxims of morality they imprisoned them within themselves instead of announcing them for the practical guidance of the people on the way of rectitude. And whenever they did make them public they choked them in obstruse theories as to be passed by unrecognized by the people who, little caring for subtle and fastidious science, abandoned themselves to the prey of prevarication. Notwithstanding that these pagan superstitions were

crumbling fast, polytheism still seemed to have as great a charm as ever, but what had been resorted to before as an awful worship was now frequented as a pastime and as a convenient cloak and opportunity for the most rampant licentiousness.

It is easy now to forecast what rule directed the actions of man in those days when there was no sublime teacher, life became one protracted trance of rapture, a prey to the wilder passions. So darkened was the light of natural rectitude that the corrupt affections of man's heart were attributed to deities who were adored as the personification of vice. There was no vice or passion in the heart of man that had not an altar, a guardian, a model. Jupiter was worshiped as the god of profligacy, Venus as the god of impurity, Bacchus as the god of intemperance, Mercury as the god of roguery, Mars as the god of strife. Thus it was that everything had conspired to prepare the way for the doctrine of Epicurus that sought to account for nature by the force that is inherent in the atom. Epicurus taught that death was an imaginary evil, the term of consciousness, the beginning of an endless sleep and therefore it was the summit of true wisdom for man not to waste his life nor torment his intellect in bootless fears or hopes about an imaginary hereafter, but to seize the passing hour and by every species of pleasure attainable to try and make a heaven on earth. Accordingly Venus was adored and the son of Semele with his bacchanals ran riot in every direction. These were the doctrines which the high priest of concupiscence lectured under the enervating

despotism of the Cæsars. What was the result of this teaching, when no thought of the future, none of the grim realities of existence were suffered to intrude? Honesty sunk in the mart, justice forsook the tribunal, skill left the arts, discipline society, and life had scarcely dawned when it hastened to decrepitude. Such was the inky darkness of the world when the star of Bethlehem appeared. Oh, how sordid and odious the sty was into which Christ had to enter to purify! These outpourings of a delirium revealed to Him those depths of sin into which nature had fallen from the eminence it occupied before the fall. However, into this cesspool of wantonness, into this forest of howling monsters, upon this ocean of fathomless iniquity the meek Christ embarked, and in each wild caprice of the passions He studied the symptoms of the malady He had been sent to cure.

Such was the rottenness of humanity when the radiant figure of Jesus appeared to reform it. Abbé Picard asks, "Who then is this Jesus to whom the civilized world owes so much to-day?" I will use his language with very little alteration. What is He who from the Jewish people and from their system of monotheism, so narrow and so little known, drew forth the grand Christian monotheism vast as the world and holding sway over the whole civilized world? What is this Jesus, who, from His sepulcher cast the Capitoline Jupiter into the tomb, and who by His cross has overthrown all these ingenious fables in which Ancient Greece, so refined, so learned, so scornful, took her delight? Who is this man of heav-

enly piety, of incomparable gentleness, of unbounded and unprecedented charity, who has raised up friends, and also foes irreconcilable even unto death, whose person is the object of a worship or of a hatred unique in its kind? All men who think deeply admire Him, all who believe adore Him, all who suffer appeal to Him, all who would overcome evil invoke Him, the remainder, that is, all who do not know Him are hurried along the fatal path of vice, impotency and darkness. Who then is He? Was He only a simple Jew, crucified by a Roman governor in a subjugated territory, without earthly power, without renown or earthly grandeur? And yet down to the present day this crucified man reigns supreme over the whole world.

The world has never seen such a combination of moral beauty and perfection as it sees in Jesus Christ. Suspicion has not dared to sully with its breath the character of the hated Nazarene. Neither the Jews who rejected Him, nor the other adversaries of Christianity have ever succeeded in bringing a serious accusation against Him. When a net of mean malevolent plots were tightening around Him, He threw down a challenge, "What man of you can charge me with sin?" Several such personages, struck by His superhuman virtues, have rendered Him the most splendid homage. "I find no cause in Him to condemn Him to death," says Pilate. "I have betrayed innocent blood," was the despairing cry of Judas. "Indeed this was a just man!" exclaimed the centurion, who stood at the foot of the cross. "But this

man had done no evil," declared the good thief on the cross.

Never had man loved other men as Jesus loved them. He had tears for the afflicted, succor for the necessitous. Like a mother bird He cries out again and again, and spreads out His wings to protect His brood. He loves His disciples and bears with patience their slowness of comprehension and inaptitude for their high mission. One of them betrays Him and He continues to love him. Another denies Him and He turns on him a look that pierces his heart. He loves the people, for two of His disciples entreat Him to call down fire from heaven on two cities which had refused to hear Him and He replies, "I am come to save men and not to destroy them." The Pharisees tried to induce Him to pronounce sentence of death upon an adulterous woman and He replies, "Let him among you who is without sin cast the first stone at her," and when the Pharisees slunk away and left Him alone with her, immensity of mercy confronting immensity of misery, He asks, "Woman, who are thy accusers?" and she answers, "No man, Lord." "Neither do I accuse thee, go and sin no more." All His acts of benevolence were real virtue, the pure gold of love.

His tastes were simple; He had no settled home of His own, He was at home everywhere, by day in the streets and squares, by night under the open sky, or in the caves or under the trees, when no compassionate people gave Him shelter. He eats with Lazarus or a Pharisee to-day, and to-morrow He is in the

desert with a crowd of people and they have only a few loaves, the next day He is on the highroad with His disciples in the noonday heat, without a morsel of bread to eat, so that His disciples begin to rub the ears of corn to obtain the grain. His clothing was scant — at Bethlehem He had a few swaddling clothes, at Calvary we see His garments enumerated. He had no money in His pocket, not even enough to pay His temple tax. His inexhaustible riches lie in His poverty. He had no cradle at His birth and no grave of His own when He died; even His body was confiscated and put under seal. What He said to the Scribe came to pass, " The foxes have their dens, and the birds their nests, but the Son of man has no place to put His head."

Among the many notable characteristics of Christ's preaching His zeal is especially remarkable. He did not confine Himself to the Synagogue; we hear of Him on the mountainside as well as in the towns, on the seashore as well as in the desert. He makes a pulpit of anything from a well to a boat. He never troubles about the number or class of His hearers. He does not quarrel or dispute with His opponents nor base His teaching on subtleties as did the schools of the day. He makes use of everything as a subject for His discourses, the lilies, the birds, life and customs. He decides with clearness and authority. He does not interpret the law, but lays it down. The whole domain of truth, natural and supernatural, lay before Him and from this He built up His marvelous discourses of the natural and supernatural as a clear

artificer combines with dexterous hand the various threads in one gay texture of many colors. Thus were fabricated those magnificent parables. With the natural ease of a spring gushing forth, and the grace of a sower scattering his grains of seed our Saviour cast abroad the golden seed of His doctrine, and that doctrine transmitted from age to age has regenerated souls and renovated society. Such teaching, however, did not fail to meet with success. Everyone felt that there was something in it, something extraordinary about it. The people followed Him in crowds, thronged and pressed around Him; there was a magnetism about Him that was inexplicable, they forgot food and home to listen to His words. His personality had a wondrous charm about it, His affability and benevolence attracted crowds. The tremendous power of His wisdom and eloquence, together with the fearlessness and force with which He exposed and stigmatized their incorrigible wickedness, was one of the very reasons that drove them to take extreme measures against Him. Even though the greater part of the unhappy people perished in their unbelief, that did not prevent the success of His teaching. The gospel He had preached passed over from the Jews to the Gentiles, and the Christian civilization of the world and the salvation of the human race is and remains the result of the teaching of Jesus Christ.

Our Saviour was bound to confirm His doctrine by miracles, because this had been foretold of the Messiah by the prophets, because this was the only means of making so many people of such different disposi-

tions believe in Him. This, then, was the first object of His miracles. Miracles were the simplest, shortest, and surest way to make people believe in Him. All other proofs require time, observation, and talent, and even then they are not convincing. Supernatural truths which cannot be proved by reason are best confirmed by supernatural deeds and miracles. Thus God shows Himself to be the author of the natural and supernatural, of the visible and the invisible. Wherever a miracle is worked in proof of a truth, there is God's hand to be seen. Thus a miracle, a divine proof of power over visible nature, is a certificate which everyone understands and which admits of no contradiction. The people understood this at once and therefore they cried out, "What is this new doctrine, for with power He commandeth even the unclean spirits?" There was no part of creation in which the power of Christ did not give evidence of His glorious supremacy. His miracles extended to all kingdoms. He is master of the impenetrable bodies through which He passes; of the substances which He changes; of the diseases He cures; of the hearts which He penetrates and softens; and of death which He changes into life. He accomplishes all these prodigies, not as one sent, but by His own power. He is man, it is true, but He is born of a virgin. He eats, but, when it pleases Him, He does without natural food. He sleeps, but while sleeping He prevents the boat from sinking. He walks upon the sea and its waters become as solid rock beneath His feet. He dies, but in dying He causes all nature to tremble.

His miracles, says Abbé Picard, are not simple embroidery on the tissue of the evangelical history, they form part of the tissue itself. "I am the light of the world," He says, and He opens the eyes of the blind. "I am the bread of life," and twice He multiplies bread. "I am the resurrection and life," and He restores and He raises the dead to life. He curses trees and they wither up as an impressive warning of the judgment that awaits unbelief. Amid His poverty and lowliness His miracles shine out like flashes of lightning over all forms of life. The greater part of the people seeing His wonderful deeds were led to the conviction that He was a prophet and sent by God, but they did not generally recognize Him as the Son of God. The Jews had too superficial and worldly a conception of the Messiah and therefore did not believe in His divinity. They could recognize Him as the Messiah from the prophecies and the miracles, and their consciences must have urged them to believe in Him, but their passions stifled the voice of conscience. Let us now see the result of His teaching, the results which no human philosophy could ever produce.

"In this period of the world," says Schegle, "in this decisive crisis between ancient and modern times, in this great central point of history stood two powers opposed to each other. On the one hand we behold the Roman Emperors, the earthly gods and absolute masters of the world in all the pomp and splendor of ancient paganism standing on the summit and the verge of the world tottering to its ruin. And on

the other hand we trace the obscure rise of an almost imperceptible point of light, from which the modern world was to spring, and whose further progress and full development through all succeeding ages constitute the true purport of modern history."

Twelve poor illiterate men, rough in speech, of obscure origin, boldly challenged the religion of the Cæsars. The eagles of pagan Rome screamed wildly at their daring, but the dove of the tabernacle soon put them to flight. Simon a fisherman, Matthew a publican, others humble boatmen from Nazareth took up the religion of their divine Master, a religion full of mystery and rigid morality. These are the men who undertook to dethrone Jupiter. Stupendous weakness hurls itself against the greatest power then in the world, the infant Church of Christ on one side and paganism on the other. Her task was colossal, but she never doubted of her triumph, because when imposture is unmasked, its doom is sealed, the passions may rally around it and redouble their efforts to sustain its tottering ascendency, but down it must come. Yes, the task was gigantic. What the Church had to extirpate was so interwoven with every transaction, thought, and institution that went to make up the whole of pagan life, that to remove it meant unraveling and rending to pieces the entire tissue, weft and woof, of private, public, and intellectual life. But as St. John Chrysostom says, "And such also is the instinct of bees, for they settle not only on the sweet, but also on the bitter flowers, and the sweetness they extract and the bitterness they eschew, and from qual-

ities the most contrary they prepare sweetest honey for man. These the Apostles imitated; from fields of philosophy so full of bitterness they provided the sweet honey of salvation for man." Before entering on their wonderful mission they were specially prepared for their work by the Holy Ghost. In the whole history of revelation there is nothing so marvelous as the transformation of the Apostles and the disciples after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them. Before the possession of the Holy Ghost these men were dull almost to blindness, but after the descent of the Holy Spirit they saw as when a great light is flashed on material darkness. Before the descent of the Holy Ghost they were ignorant, but after the descent they astonished those who heard them speak, they were considered enlightened sages. Before the Pentecostal fires descended they were weak and cowardly, but when these fires commenced to burn they became ignited with a martial fire that made them daring, bold, and brave. Before the Spirit of heaven visited them, they were lazy, indolent, unsympathetic, and cold, but when this heavenly Guest tenanted their souls, they became diligent, loving, and full of a warmth that was not earthly or cheerless. In Gethsemane they fled from their divine Master, and abandoned Him, but now they were ready to abandon everything for Him. With fear and trembling they hid themselves when Jesus was draining the chalice of ignominy in Pilate's Hall, but now they were ready to defend Him even unto death, and did so later on with the courage of true soldiers of Christ. In a

word the Holy Ghost transformed the Apostles and the Apostles transformed the world. When Christ was living in the world the world spat at Him, but now that He is not here the world believes in Him and adores Him. When Christ was preaching the word of life on earth they would not listen to Him, but now they listen to His gospel. The world crucified Him and now it adores Him whom it crucified. Is not this transformation matchless and miraculous? The power of Christ in His discourses was adapted so as to reach and touch each soul at the point where it was most vulnerable, and where it most needed relief. There was light for the ignorant, and the unraveling of entanglements for the perplexed, there was courage for the timid, and strength for those too weak to cast off their chains of sin, reproof for the haughty, comfort for the mourner, peace for the troubled, and refreshment for the weary. When the Apostles commenced to speak after Pentecost, their words reached the ears of the strangers from so many various lands, that each one understood them for himself in his own tongue. And such to-day is the power of God even in the mouths of the weakest of the ministers of His Church.

The Apostles preached the doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth, showed that He was the way, the truth, and the life, the Saviour of the world. By degrees erroneous theories were put down, the phantoms of paganism dissipated, the worship of false gods confuted, and that iniquity of all sorts of profanation which a diligent superstition amassed was destroyed.

They hurled themselves against ignorance and imposture, and battered to pieces every wall of separation, and united not only Greek, Roman, Jew and barbarian together, but slave and citizen, helot and aristocrat in one common brotherhood and league of fraternal charity. They warred against everything that attempted to blight humanity. They never afflicted anguish except to effect a cure. They provided an education that lead men from poisoned wells where their passions were inebriated, to purer fountains. They struck to the ground the fetters of the slaves and preached equity between man and man. They taught obedience to those who were subjects, and had a word of warning to those who are on high that there is one still higher, and commanded charity to all. Woman, our divine Master told us to tell thee that you must be exalted to an eminence so august as to render your influence the corrective of that brutality of which you have been heretofore the instigation and the slave. He commanded us to hallow the connubial state and maintain its indissolubility, and thereby make the domestic circle a miniature of the church, a preparatory school for heaven. Their doctrine had a solace for every affliction, an expiation for every trespass, and it took even from death its sting.

As Christ came to His own and His own received Him not, and when He went about doing good they said that He had a devil in Him, and called Him a blasphemer, so in like manner were His disciples treated. They were pursued from the very first as the infant Saviour was by Herod. The murderers of

man's felicity with all the allied powers, pride, lust, and selfishness had an instinctive presentiment that the teaching of the Apostles was destined for their discomfiture. Consequently they were up in arms against it. The unregenerate world foams and rails at the spirit of Christ's doctrine like the demoniacal boy at the sight of our Lord when He descended from the mountain. His presence was distasteful, was uncongenial, for He was the evil spirit's rebuking Master. That same Master's teaching was and is just as distasteful, for its stings to the very quick and consequently the world hates it with a withering hatred. When, therefore, we preach that the world is a seducer we must not expect love in return; when we advise penitence we irritate it; when we even clothe ourselves in the livery of the church we are denounced as showmen clad in tinsel magnificence; when we suggest a code to direct correct living we are called tyrants; when we reprove the prodigal we are said to be interfering with man's liberty. The Church lives in the world as the eucalyptus tree lives in swamps, planted there to neutralize the malarial atmosphere that rises and hangs around the stagnant pools of decaying nature. The Church in assailing idolatry exasperated and drew down the entire weight of Roman vengeance. It sought to crush it in its cradle, and when disappointed it ceased not to pursue it and persecute it. The followers of Christ were hunted from the face of the earth as a race of miscreants, no place was left them but the dark caverns of the earth, and even in the catacombs, these crypts

of everlasting gloom and sepulchral silence, they were not secure against the inroads of persecution. No day passed without its tragedy of blood. The hatchet of the lictor fell upon the brow wreathed to offer sacrifice, the bowstring interrupted the half-uttered vows of many a votary. The whole weight of the Roman Empire had been accumulated to crush and extinguish the teaching of Christ. Stroke after stroke fell upon its head and members. Its limbs were torn and hacked to pieces, and strewed as feasts for dogs and ravens.

The Apostles were persecuted by every official authority, proscribed as the greatest criminals and cast out as the scum of the earth. I preach Christ crucified, cried St. John, as they threw him into a cask of boiling oil. I preach Christ crucified, exclaimed St. Paul, as they severed his head from his body. I preach Christ crucified, cried St. Peter and St. Andrew as they nailed them to crosses. I preach Christ crucified, said St. Bartholomew as they burnt him. I preach Christ crucified, said St. James as they hurled him from the pinnacle of the temple. So went on the trail of blood and martyrdom, and so went on, too, the grand train of their heroic successors preaching the folly of the pagan theogonies and the divinity of their divine Master, and sealing their testimony with their blood. The first twenty-two popes suffered martyrdom, and historians estimate that about three millions of the faithful were put to death. Christians were mowed down, but reinforcements were more numerous than their losses. The Coliseum, that im-

mense chalice of blood, overflowed time after time with Christian blood. "The prayers, the patience, the calmness," says St. Augustine, "which accompanied their death made the Princes ashamed of the laws that condemned them." Of all the manifestations of Christian courage martyrdom was a puzzle to the pagans. They could understand the gladiators shouting at the foot of the Imperial balcony, "Hail, Cæsar! we on our way to death salute thee." "But they could not understand the hymns of the martyrs to Christ, the supreme reverence shown to an invisible God, the calmness with which they met death, the fearlessness on the threshold of the world beyond, the faith already changed to sight," those unspeakable songs of exile choked with the hot tears of love and blood, that their union with their God was so long deferred. The shrewd and refined Greek, the sober and sedate Roman said, "*These men are sincere,*" and consequently accepted a religion which demanded from them great sacrifices, a complete reform of their moral code. "On the exhausted furrows of the pagan world the new doctrine deposited the germs of resurrection," and in time the tiny grain of mustard seed grew into a tree. Truth triumphed over falsehood. The Cross, the symbol of the Crucified, took the place of the proud Roman eagle.

"For three hundred years the streets of that proud Roman city of paganism had been watered with the blood of martyrs, and the catacombs beneath peopled with their bones, and as day by day the Sacrifice of Redemption was offered over their relics, a Christian

people was formed in those recesses which now had come forth into the light of day. Paganism still lingered like a gigantic specter in the morning dawn, but now it was a thing of the past and about to leave its palaces to the successors of the fisherman." Its doom was sealed. The Imperial Power was dying fast. Yes, that mighty conflict has taken place between all that was powerful and all that was weakest, between wisdom and foolishness, between the poor bare-footed fisherman from Bethsaida and his successors on one side and the successors of Augustus Cæsar on the other side with the united forces of the world. And what have these mighty efforts to destroy the Church come to? They have only served to prove its indestructibility, to augment the luster of its triumphs, and to disable and shatter the empire of paganism; and when the diadem and scepter of the Cæsars lay broken on the tomb of Peter and Paul, wave after wave of persecution struck the rock upon which Christ built His Church only to be shattered in futile attempts of destruction against her peerless form.

Like eagles lured to a field of carnage, the Goths, the Huns, and Vandals were lured from their forest homes by the scent of the dying empire, and falling upon its mighty frame tore its limbs to pieces. By this means they were brought as neophites to the threshold of the Church and prepared for conversion. Gradually they became tamed of their ferociousness by contact with Christianity. The Hun changed his war-song for a penitential psalm, the Vandal had learned to glow with charity, the Goth had laid down his

quiver for the cross, and Imperial Rome, once the charnel of paganism, now became the sanctuary of the Crucified.

Yes! these same men without human aid have succeeded to overthrow not only Judaism but also paganism, which had on its side wealth, science, power, the attractions and allurements of a morality favorable to the passions and pandering to man's lower appetites. They succeeded in causing a repentant world to prostrate itself at the feet of a supposed criminal put to death on an ignominious cross. They persuaded an infinite number of men to renounce what they believed and practiced up to that time, and to adopt a religion that presented to the mind unfathomable mysteries, and to the will a morality conflicting with all the instincts of sensual nature. If Christianity was a myth, do you think that millions would sacrifice their lives for a myth? The very ungarnished simplicity of their faith in Christ was a proof of their sincerity.

Will you explain to me how the doctrine of Christ, so contrary to the interests of the passions of the age, in fact subversive of every teaching then extant, attracted so many followers, how it filled up its ranks from the most contrary dispositions, from the skeptical Roman, the scoffing Greek, the exasperated Jew, and accomplished this in such a short time after the death of Christ? It cannot be explained unless we have recourse to the fountain of the mysterious and the miraculous. If Jesus was only man, how can we account for His teaching revolutionizing the whole

world, and still holding sway over the minds and hearts of men. Jesus was considered such a vile malefactor that they crucified Him; still His doctrine swept from the face of the world all those false gods before whom the world bowed down, and now, after nearly two thousand years have elapsed, when the days that commemorate His birth and resurrection come round in the cycle of time the world pauses, uncovers its head and adores.

With regard to the moral code of laws that should guide man in his varied avocations of life, we have men to-day fearlessly professing from the chairs of science a course of ethics that is as corrupt as it is startling. They strive to upheave the foundations of the ancient faith and revolutionize thought and life. They draw up a decalogue that is both confused and confusing, and if some don't do away with God altogether they cast Him from His throne and ask Him to take a back seat; the intellect of man, according to these, must get first place. In the emancipation and fruition of modern thought, they say, greater works than those of Christ will be performed. The wondrous deeds of Christ are a great stumbling-block to these intellectual pigmies. They cannot deny them, neither can they explain them scientifically, and they cannot do such portentous deeds themselves. So far we never heard of their clients or adherents giving sight to the born-blind, nor has science ever resuscitated a man rotten in his grave. Yes, these miracles of Jesus are inaccessible heights that block their boasted scientific progress, mountains whose snow-

white peaks cannot be reached, and when they look at their heavenly loftiness they exclaim, "They are not real, but only a mental mirage."

It is not God, they say, but science, custom, exigencies, that command us not to steal, not to commit murder, to have one wife or many. There are no God-given commandments. They maintain that neither right nor wrong exist, that such things are merely the self-interested inventions of the great ones of the world. Notions of right and wrong are adopted as a result of custom and training, are formed by society. Morality is not an offense against God, it is an act to be judged according to the conception that society gives it. *So taught paganism of old;* Jupiter and Venus were worshiped as the gods of profligacy and impurity. Thus is the doctrine of paganism dressed in a new garment and proclaimed aloud to be observed by our youth of the twentieth century. Crime, according to materialistic science, is merely the result of cerebral deformity or constitutional vice. The robber and the assassin are irresponsible, and therefore, interesting victims of circumstances. Civil and commercial relations rest upon a tacit consent that everyone struggling for existence is authorized to deceive his neighbor as much as he can. Without lying and perjury we are bound to succumb in the warfare of material interests.

If this should be the standard to guide our lives why should we not arm ourselves as strong as possible for the fray, fling away honesty as an encum-

brance, and prefer to succeed by vice rather than fail through the practice of virtue!

If virtue has no fundamental law, if conscience is a false guide, if there be no such thing as crime, no merit and no demerit, the social edifice ought to be completely destroyed, and everyone abandon himself to the fury of his natural inclinations.

These sophistries subversive of the rights of property, of family ties, and of the whole social constitution are dangerous and pernicious. They flatter and legitimize the bad passions which ferment within the breast of the multitude. The longing for fresh pleasures and for immediate gratification is an unquenchable thirst which corrupts every human heart. Were it publicly proclaimed that man's natural instincts are to him the one and only moral law, every protection would be carried away, and we would become witnesses and victims of untold horrors. Released from the control of duty; men would be but strugglers of life. I have no hesitation in saying, that if this code of ethics was adopted by society, there is no reason why poverty should not steal, no reason why the dagger, the gun, should not be used at one's pleasure, no reason why life should not become one protracted trance of rapture. No rein should curb our passions, but should indulge them with that zest and uncircumscribed limit which would make man not superior but inferior to the brute creation.

These men teach us to ignore the religion of Christ, or that of the prophets of old, as it is an invention to dragoon us to follow an adopted plan. Religion,

they say, is not a product of heaven, but a product of the brain. It is a mental intoxication and is arrayed against progress; while other departments of thought have been reduced to science, religion has been tolerated to go on developing preposterous dreams. These men ask us to look upon them as the Aristotles, the Platos, the Socrates of this progressive century. We have true scientists in Sir Isaac Newton, Ampere, Pasteur, and the like who were not alone theists but also sincere Christians. They have not sought from natural science that which it could not impart, viz., the secret of nature's author, but their belief in God, as the Creator and Disposer of all things, urged them to seek in the world laws more simple and comprehensible. So far from there being any contradiction between the developments of science and the religious beliefs of these men, faith was their most helpful assistant in their highly fruitful researches. The great problem of man remained to them undiscoverable by scientific investigations, and must ever remain obscure to unaided reason.

When Lazarus came out of his grave at the commanding voice of Christ, the Scribes and Pharisees cried out, "Crucify Him." When the Church of Christ raises her voice to lift humanity from the sepulcher of rottenness to a high standard of life, the University scribe proclaims aloud, "Crucify her." It is the teaching office of Christ, the proclamation of His doctrine and His law that makes the world angry. It is Christ's priestly office that the world rejects, because it upbraids her with her sins and reminds her

of the mediation of Jesus Christ for her salvation. When the Church speaks of chastity and judgment the world shudders, and will not submit. When priests are martyred, their enemies are not aiming to crush this or that individual, but it is at that which he represents the blow is meant to kill, hence the war, the enmity, is *against Christ* when persecution rages against the Church. The blows fall on the administrators in the Church, the Church itself they cannot touch,— it is not a piece of wood or stone, or human flesh; what save a body can be laid hold of and bound? One can no more fetter the spirit, faith, grace, or authority than one can seize and bind the light. The strokes of persecution only benefit her, for the more you shake a flower full of seed the more you propagate that flower. As the storm-wind scatters the seeds, so persecutions scatter the seeds of the Church.

There is another feature in our history to-day that likens our times to those of pagan days. In religious Jerusalem the multiplication of sects distorted the true character of the Messiah. In pagan Rome polytheism, or multiplication of gods distorted the true meaning of God, and to-day in Christian countries the multiplication of sects is distorting the true character of Christianity.

Jesus Christ said, "If I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all the world to Myself." He has been lifted up, and He has lifted the world and held it in His bleeding arms. He has transformed the world. From His sepulcher He has hurled the Capitoline

Jupiter into the tomb. Before Christ came no religion, no philosophy had given to the world what He gave. Through Him the laws of the world have been transformed. To Jesus Christ and His Church we owe the highest perception of God, the purest moral, and the most perfect model. Suckled at her breast, we know more than the luminaries of Rome and Athens. Our origin, when and how we had a beginning, are no insoluble enigmas with us.

By His doctrine He has overthrown all these ingenious fables in which ancient Greece took her delight. He tells us to set a guard not merely at the gates of our senses, but even at the entrance of our hearts. It enjoined self-sacrifice instead of that luxury, and that love of pleasure which was enervating society, and loved and adored everywhere. Evangelical morality is the highest creation which has issued from the conscience of man, and is the first code of perfect life. The moral law of Jesus Christ is of incomparable beauty. It is the regenerator of souls and the renovator of society.

His doctrine demanded that the law which gave the rich the right to make chattels of the poor slave should give place to the reign of charity which made the master the friend of the slave; the man of wealth the steward of the gifts of God, and the sovereign the servant and not the tyrant of the people. A new world, says Abbé Picard, has sprung out of the sepulcher of Christ; it was conceived beneath the tree of the Cross. It recognizes no distinction between Greek and Scythian, and sends forth through the

clouds of human passion the softening rays of her influence to dispel prejudice and melt down hearts grown hard with hate. The pagans, lovers of beauty and art, did not love the poor, the wretched or the lowly. But the apostles of Christ seek the poor in squalid dens and filthy prisons, they smooth the uneasy pillow of sickness, reclaim the wanderings of madness, and breathe into the ears of the dying immortal hopes and consolations of faith. Others reform vice, and by the majesty of religion overawe reprobate wickedness. Rome in pagan days took pride in her Vestal virgins, but look at the world to-day and see the thousands of virgins who made a funeral pyre of the world's tinseled livery, and are now spreading their snow-white wings over the wastrels of humanity and deserted orphan. Did infidelity ever produce a soul like St. Vincent de Paul? Did science ever give us from its molds a soul like St. Teresa, St. Ambrose, or St. Louis? When they accuse us of want of sympathy for our fellow man, we point to our asylums for the poor, the decrepit, the blind, the deaf and dumb, the orphan and the homeless. When they accuse us of want of sympathy for the brawny arm and sweated brow of labor that drop in sweat the very blood of the soul to amass the wealth of the few, let them read Pope Leo's encyclical on labor, and hear our pulpits ring with the gospel of our divine Founder, "What is over give it in alms." If ever a blush of shame should crimson the cheek of man, it is when we read the history of man's tyranny over his fellow man in the days of slavedom. What picture

is more awful and degrading than to see husband torn from spouse, children from mothers to whom they clung with nature's love, and then hurried to be sold as beasts of burden in the public market. Irrespective of cold, heat, or sex they were stripped of their clothes, and harnessed to toil under the lash until their bones are exposed by galling sores, then huddled together in sleeping dungeons to the violation of all moral dictates. Who broke those chains of slavery, and restored the equilibrium between man and his fellow man? Christ's gospel.

If those who accuse the Church as a bar to progress and liberty, believe that true liberty and progress consist in a liberty to vitiate those sacrosanct laws which prohibit us from indulging our lower passions, then we agree with them that the Catholic Church is an enemy to that liberty which is not true liberty but thraldom and slavery. It is those false accusers who are the highway robbers of liberty, who by undoing the couplings attempt to run the car of progress to wreck and ruin. Amidst the blinding storm of persecution we can catch at intervals the fitful glimmerings of the torch of Catholic science now and then escaping through the chinks of caverned rocks and other hiding-places, where aged priests lingered about to teach the poor persecuted children of the land. This was how the Church preserved learning when persecuting legislation sealed up the doors of every college and convent school. Yet we are told that she is acting as a break on the chariot-wheel of progress.

The whole history of her life is a font from which genius draws her pearly streams. Truth has been her chart and compass pointing the one true course over the darksome waters of existence to the secure blessed haven of eternal happiness; before the glare of that truth the foul mists of bigotry and prejudice must fly as the sea-fog before the freshening breeze.

It is true the Church is not completely sheltered by the cross from all defilement; the thorns by the wayside tear the seamless robe with which Christ has clothed her. The truths of the Church may sometimes be blotched through the infirmities of human nature, but this is common to all things. Why should the Church be an exception? Yes, it does happen to the Church but only with those things that are not essential to her life; in this sense the Church is like all other institutions and must share the fate of earthly things. The human body of our Lord suffered pain, and His soul was sorrowful even unto death; it is not strange then that His Spouse, the Church, should be prevented, through the wickedness of her children, from exercising that authority to which she is entitled by her character. Kingdoms, once devoted to her, have now renounced their allegiance to her, but she was not the loser. Christian Europe was shivered to fragments by her rebellious children, but it was not as bad as that to which her divine Founder submitted, it will be only the signal of her exultation as it was of His. He suffered a most ignominious death, but He rose again glorious and immortal; so will His Church. She puts off that

which is liable to corruption and continues for ever arrayed in that which is essential to her life. As the true Body of Christ is indestructible and imperishable, so also the Church is indestructible and unchangeable, she cannot suffer interior dissolution nor yet be removed by an extraneous power. The tree, in which the sap still rises, and whose fruit still comes to perfection, has lost many a fair branch lopped off and now lies withered, molding away fast, but the heart beats as vigorous as ever, the head remains unscathed, the gangrene that could not reach the nobler parts was confined to the lower and inferior parts. Let us not then despond when the scales of the fight tremble, and the issue seems to waver in the balance; let us look upwards at the peace of the kingdom of heaven, where Christ reigns, and hear Him say, "I am with you."

Erase the name of Jesus Christ from our laws, obliterate it from all our books, scrape it off from the face of every monument, and you labor in vain if you are foolish enough to think that you will extinguish either Him or His Church. On mountain tops, in peaceful valleys, in the depths of the slums of the poor, on silent tombs, two small pieces of wood in the form of a cross will speak forever of Him. In the momentous hours of our lives we make the sign of the cross upon our breasts and upon our forehead. The Cross has become the badge of honor. The Victim of Calvary holds sway over the whole world, confirming His prophecy, "If I be lifted up from the earth I will draw the whole world to Myself," and will

continue to hold sway until the last wave breaks on the shore of eternity.

Do we not see the Church hoisting the signal of alarm when the great ship of the state or society creaks in those raging storms of darkness and error? In all ages do we not see her friendly beacon-light pointing out that rocks are nigh? Do we not see her serried ranks pushing back the enemies of mankind? And armored within the fortress of truth she is impregnable against the encroachments of error and deceit. The call "To arms" has sounded in this great age of pampered civilization, when men are too busy to hear the word of God, for the word of the world is louder. The public is inoculated with infidelity and emasculated ethics, the virus is spreading through the system, there is danger of a general blood-poisoning. Do you not feel something menacing in the air? But do not lose courage, she solved the problems of the past, so will she quell those that now lie hatching in the womb of the future. The loftiness of her nature and the omnipotence of her strength are from Him who promised, "I will be at your side to the end of time."

SIN AND REDEMPTION

Our experience obliges us to believe that on account of our violation of the laws of God there is a great deviation in human nature from order and rectitude. Our nature has become unsound by the abuse of our minds, the conduct of our wills, the corruption of our senses, and the immoderate use of our appetites. The effect produced from these abuses cramp the body, produce deformities and corporal defects. These defects, these deformities are transmitted to the offspring. The heavier and the sharper the instrument is that inflicts a wound upon our bodies, the deeper and the more painful is the wound. There is not a doubt about it that a fault when it is great leaves behind it a scar in the constitution and organism of man, and that constitutional scar is transmitted generation after generation, corrupting each generation as it meets it in the transmission. Sin can produce in him who commits it changes so great as to be capable of altering both physically and morally his constitution, and though parents but transmit their corporal defects and dispositions, yet as the body is the prison of the soul and the instrument she uses in her thoughts, feelings and actions, the soul herself suffers contraction and limitation in the exercise of her powers through her intimate union with the

body. This moral and physical deformity is, therefore, transmitted to the offspring by way of generation.

When our first parents were created they were endowed with inestimable privileges, their flesh was subject to their will, their will to their understanding, and as long as they observed the command of God, their hearts would remain pure and innocent, they would wear the white stole of grace and beauty. But they sinned and by their sin withdrew their faith from God and gave it to His enemy. They revolted through a spirit of pride and aspired to be as God. They deprived their Creator of that homage they owed to God, both as individuals and as the representatives of the human race, and they did this in the face of a divine command, and in the defiance of the light and grace with which they were endowed. When our first parents rebelled against their Creator, they were deprived of the reward promised to them, and despoiled of their privileges. Their wisdom was converted into ignorance, their will into weakness, and perpetual immunity from disease was substituted by sickness and death. Now like engenders like, hence the blindness of our understanding, the weakness of our will, this corruption was transmitted to their descendants. Reason, therefore, comes to the same conclusion as revelation, and considering the immense distance between the natural and the supernatural, the meagerness and the sterility of reason in illustrating this profound mystery is amply supplied by the fecundity of the divine revelation.

As the whole tree and all its branches are virtually contained in the root, the whole race of mankind is virtually contained in Adam. The question is often asked, "How am I a sinner when I am born? Why should I be punished for the sins of others?" In order to have a clear understanding of the solution of this problem, we must keep before our minds that Adam, our first parent, has to be considered as Adam, an individual, and as Adam, a species, variety and unity joined in one. In like manner do we consider the human race which, being one by the substance which constitutes it, and various by the persons who compose it, is one and various at the same time. Also, each one of the individuals who compose humanity, being separated from the rest by what constitutes it an individual of the species becomes, like the human race, one and various at the same time. Now the species left Adam by generation to become separately constituted, but as Adam was not alone an individual but also a species, it necessarily follows that he was in the species as he was in the individual. Hence after the death of Adam he was still living in the species, and as he sinned before the separation, he sinned conjointly with his individual nature and with his collective nature, and as he is still living in the species he still preserves his sin. Now as collective Adam and human nature are one and the same thing, human nature is perpetually culpable, because it is perpetually sinful. And as human nature is in every individual, Adam lives perpetually in every man in what constitutes Adam's lasting life, Sin. Therefore when

we are born although we are infants, yet we are adults in as much as we are Adam, and are sinners. When Adam came from the hands of his Creator, I was in him, and when I came from the womb of my mother he was in me, and in this way I am conceived and born in sin. No one could have sinned like Adam, his sin was beyond the conception of the human mind, his sin was one and various at the same time, it was single in *reality,* and all sins in *posse,* he alone could stain the beauty, the order, the harmony of creation.

Adam was the head, the heart, the voice of the world, that through him all the creatures beneath him might honor and worship their Creator, but Adam by his revolt defeated God's design over His creation at large, and brought a deterioration upon the entire world, for he was the fontal principle of all humanity. God designed that all men should be of one mind in His eternal Word of Truth, and of one spirit in His Holy Spirit, as they are of one body through propagation from one common father of their race. Such was the divine plan, but this union has been thrown into disorder through the sin of our first parents, who put pride in the place of charity, revolt in the place of obedience. This pride has not only separated man from God, but man from man, by breaking the concert of humanity after it had lost its harmony with God. What rents and wounds, what discords have been made in human nature. See the strifes, the wars between men, see the divisions of the whole human family, mind wars against mind, heart against heart, nation against nation, sect against

sect. Death came and corruption grew, and iniquity was bred from iniquity until it exceeded all measure, and humanity was insatiable of sin, perishing in soul, perishing in bodily corruption. Satan was riding in his triumphal car and proclaiming his despotic government over the human race. God saw the sentence of death passed on human transgression gathering force from human corruption. He saw the great cup of iniquity filling up with the malice of men. Was He to allow what He made to His image and likeness to go to pieces without any hope of deliverance? No, it is a case of demanding a divine intervention. Man could not make due atonement of himself, because the oblation would be unclean, because the innocent man ceased to exist and the sinful man remains after Adam's sin, and a sinful sacrifice would be an insult to God. It is a case demanding a divine intervention. It is a case that calls for the intervention of the firmest, the most profound, the most divine of moral powers. As the iniquity is human, it must be atoned for in a human way; but as it has relative infinity of guilt, as being committed against God, the atonement must be divine. The root of the evil is pride, and this must be supplanted by a new humility. The result was the loss of subjection to God, and disobedience to His voice, and these must be exchanged for a new submission and a new obedience. The inward rebellion of the will issues forth in the rebellion of the senses, defiling the whole man, and this must be rectified through suffering and denial. The whole man is turned from God, and

through divine power the whole man must be turned anew to God. And as the human race formed one corporation with the fallen Adam, it shall by faith be incorporated with a better Adam, inseparable from God, from whom grace and justice shall descend as from the head to the members. God resolved to come and live among men, to take a body like man, for if He came in any other form the scum of putrid matter was so gross and thick on the eyes of the world that it would not see Him. But this body He did not take after the manner in which we take it, not through the intervention of man, but by the operation of the Holy Ghost and a daughter of Adam who was preserved free from sin. From them and through them divine life entered into our human nature untouched by sin and by His death restored us to life. He bridged over the infinite distance between His divinity and our humanity, and in this humanity He descended into the lowest depths of creation where He found blindness to restore by light, and misery to redeem by justice. And as the sun which He created and placed in the heavens to give light and quickening influence to the earth is neither defiled nor obscured by earthly things whilst it enlightens and purifies whatever is in the earth, much more did the Most Holy Word of God make Himself known in the Body without being defiled in the Body, but being free from corruption He gave life and purity to the Body. By becoming man He did not cease to be God. As the soul and body is one in man so God and man is one in Christ, but there is no human per-

son in Christ. As the body of man is united with his soul in one person, while the substances are distinct, so the humanity of Christ is united with His divinity in one person, whilst His two natures are distinct. As the body of man is the living instrument of the soul to do his will, so the humanity of Christ is the living instrument of His divine person to do His will. This body He delivered up to death for all men whom He made His brethren. The consequence was, He checked the hostile powers, He turned death into life, and restored peace by appeasing the offended majesty of God. He gave up His human nature to be crucified that, by the destruction of our mortal nature in Him, He might find immortal life both for Himself and for us: and that by suffering with Him, dying with Him to our old and corrupted nature, we might rise in Him to a new life. He atones for the excess of our pride with the excess of His humility. He atones for the excess of our disobedience by the excess of His obedience, and there on the Cross between heaven and earth He reconciles both as a Mediator. He endures all ignominy, and sounding all the depths of abasement He atones for the sins of our bodies with the agonies of His own. What a profound mystery is the Incarnation, unsearchable in its elevation, unfathomable in its depths, and inexhaustible in truth and grace; He came as a consoler to the poor, as strength to the weak, as one desolate to those in desolation, as light to the darkness of intellect, as a Saviour to all.

If God did not intervene when Adam prevari-

cated, if He left him to the inevitable consequences of his sin, Adam's fall would have been irremediable, and his perdition infallible. But God did intervene, He condemned him and promised him a remedy. This remedy consisted in God approaching man and uniting Himself to him with a merciful bond. Penalty was this bond between God and man. As we all sinned in Adam, so are we all saved by Jesus Christ. "We are all in Adam because we have solidarity in him, and we are all in Jesus Christ in a similar way in as much His merits are reversible to us. By virtue of the dogma of imputation we all suffer Adam's penalty and by the virtue of the dogma of substitution Christ suffered for us all." The most uncivilized tribes, the most uncultivated peoples believed that the sins of some can bring down the anger of God on the heads of all, and all can be saved from the penalty due from their sin by offering a victim in perfect holocaust. Children are punished for the sins of their parents, and sometimes are saved through the merits of their ancestors. Even this belief is found in the creed of mythology. Œdipus sins, and the gods pour out the cup of their displeasures on Thebes. Here we see Œdipus to be the object of divine wrath, and the merits of expiation are reversible to Thebes. When the Hebrew people put Jesus to death, they cried out, "Let His blood be upon us and upon our children." In these very words they imputed to One and chastised in Him the sins of all, and demanded the application of that very same dogma to themselves, when they said, "Let our children

suffer." This dogma was from the beginning of the world proclaimed by the bloody sacrifices. Abel was the first to offer a bloody sacrifice, and it was acceptable to God as an expiatory sacrifice, an acceptable holocaust; and the human race after Abel's sacrifice believed that the pure victims placed on the smoking altars had a purifying effect.

The sacrifice of Abel, as a sacrifice in general, was an act of devotion and adoration towards the omnipotent God; as a bloody sacrifice it was the proclamation of the dogma of the prevarication of Adam; it was the proclamation of sin and the penalty, without which Adam alone should be offered in sacrifice; it was a proclamation of the solidarity, without which Abel would not have inherited sin. With respect to God the sacrifice of Abel was an acknowledgment of the care He has for all human beings. If we look at the victims offered, it was a commemoration of the promise He gave of removing the penalty from the true culprit, and of the reversibility, by virtue of which those punished for the sin of Adam were to be saved by the merits of Another, and of the substitution, by virtue of which One who was to come should be offered in sacrifice for the whole human race. Finally, as the victims were the first-born lambs without spot, the sacrifice of Abel was symbolical of the true sacrifice in which the meek and spotless Lamb, the Son of God, was to be offered in holiest sacrifice for the sins of the world. As time rolled on amid the mad clash of people fighting against people, of great tumults and proud rebellions, of sin-

ister cries and mad discords, amid the implacable rancors, endless wars and bloody battles, and all submerged in the mud of idolatry, these bloody sacrifices lost to some extent their meaning, but God never permitted what they symbolized to be obliterated from the minds of the people, that they were types of a great sacrifice yet to come when the merits of the Immaculate Lamb would be reversible to us. This great truth is evidently clear in the selection of the people of the innocent victims which they crowned with flowers, and then sacrificed that by their death the divine wrath would be appeased and the debt of the people be paid. These sacrifices showed also the universality of the belief of the human race in the purifying efficacy of blood shed in a certain way, and its expiatory virtue when shed in that way. Without the blood shed by the Redeemer, the common debt the human race contracted would never have been paid off. I don't say that this form of redemption on the part of God was absolutely necessary, but that it was adorable and convenient. Without a Redeemer whithersoever man went in vain would he raise his eyes to heaven, for it would be to him a metallic heaven, no ray of hope coming from it to illumine his brow. If it were possible to sacrifice all the angels in heaven, their sacrifice would not be sufficiently expiatory, or if the whole human race, either individually or collectively were sacrificed, its sacrifice would be null and void. The union of man and God was broken by man and that union could not be restored by man; it required the intervention

of God. The restoration of universal order desired by God could not be realized even by the deification of man, hence it had to be realized by the humanization of God. On the cold clay of the earth with the canopy of heaven as a covering, with a virgin mother on one side and St. Joseph on the other, there lay He who was the Desired of nations. He who was to come, came, the merciful and tremendous, the meek and terrible. He is the solution of all problems, the subject of all prophecies, the prefigured of all figures, the end of all dogmas, the confluence of the human and the divine orders, the key to all secrets, the light of all enigmas, the promised of God, the expected of all patriarchs, the reverenced of heaven, the father of the afflicted on earth. He has the loftiest title of nobility the human race possesses. Examining man's imperfect and contradictory interior organic constitution, considering the blindness of his understanding, the weakness of his will, the gross inclinations of his flesh, the ardor of his concupiscence, and the perversity of his inclinations how contemptuous is man! Human nature without these imperfections was taken up by God and united to Himself, to His divine Personality, and this action on the part of God raised up man to a height of nobility so lofty that human intelligence cannot reach it. Where is human dignity if it is not in the mystery of God-made man by virtue of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin!

By becoming man without ceasing to be God, He synthetically united God to man: and as spiritual

essences and corporal substances were already synthetically united in man, it results that God-made man united in Himself on the one side corporal substances and spiritual essences and on the other side the Creator of all with all His creatures. At the same time by voluntarily suffering and dying for man, He took on Himself, removing it from man, that primitive sin, through which the whole race in Adam fell into corruption, and was condemned. How beautiful this mystery is when we look into the convenient coincidences observed by it. If the whole human race suffered by one man's act, it was just and expedient that the whole human race should be saved by One other Adam more perfect. If we all were condemned by the law of solidarity, which was the law of justice, it was right that we all should be saved by the law of reversibility, which was the law of mercy. It would be very unjust that we should suffer for the sins of a representative, if we were not allowed to merit through the merits of a substitute. Nothing is more conformable to reason than that, as the sins of our first parents were imputable, the merits of our second Parent should be reversible. And hence since we are saved by a Substitute, we have no reason to complain of being condemned in our representative. The Precious Blood shed on Calvary not alone blotted out our sins and satisfied the penalty, but through its inestimable value placed in us the capacity of meriting crowns. Two graces were given us from the Cross, first the grace of accepting and secondly the grace of acquiring meri-

torious virtue through Him when tribulation is accepted.

What a tremendous mystery this Jesus Christ is. The Son of God made man to redeem us. The redemption is the grand synthesis in which are united and reconciled the divine justice and mercy. Considered as God, the Lord of heaven and earth, yet born in a stable, living a hidden life yet suffering an ignominious death on the Cross. He is the center-point in which all theses and antitheses, with their perpetual contradiction and infinite variety, are united and reconciled in a superior synthesis. He is the poorest of the poor, and the richest of the rich; He has but swaddling clothes, and yet He is clothed with resplendent robes; He obeys man, and yet He commands the heavens and earth; He has not the wherewith to satisfy His hunger nor assuage His thirst, yet He commands the rocks to distill water and the loaves to multiply. Men insult Him and the Seraphim adore Him; invested with supreme power, yet He is obedient and dies because He is ordered to die. He is sad, sorrowful, and dejected on the Cross although He subjected the world and carried it by storm with the aid of a few poor fishermen. That day when Jesus hung on the Cross was a day of joy and sadness: it was sad because who could look upon that Cross and not feel pierced with sorrowful sympathy at the awful agony of the Crucified Saviour; it was a day of joy, too, because it was the day when all things were restored to order. The Cross was the symbol of His love and the pledge of His grace.

Through it the virgins are chaste, and the fathers of the desert led angelic lives; through it the martyrs bled and laid down their lives in unshaken constancy. Through it the weak astounded the strong, and the proscribed ascended the Capitol, disarmed and conquered the world. Through the Cross all who combat gain strength; all who seek it gain mercy, and all who weep gain consolation. For the past nineteen centuries the Cross has preached its silent and touching sermon. Through Him crucified men change their course of life, abandon their property, reject sensual pleasure, chastise their flesh, believe in the sanctifying virtue of suffering, lead a pure life, and believe that all things visible are of less value than the things invisible. In this manner do we read upon the Cross the words of the Prophet Osee: "I will draw them with the cords of Adam, with the bonds of love." When, on one occasion, St. Thomas was asked where did he get all his learning, St. Thomas pointed to a crucifix, "there is the source of anything that I know." Each time that we look upon the symbol of the Crucified let us not alone remember the words of St. Thomas, but pause to peer into these wounds and read there the language of love. This voice of love is continually sounding in the ears of the sinner, and it says, "Why persecutest me?" And it is this loving and soft accent of gentle complaint that goes straight to the soul, and transforms it, and converts it all to God, and obliges it to seek Him in the city and in the desert, in the rugged mountain and in the plains, by the highroads and by-paths.

It is that voice which inflames the soul with the chaste love of the Spouse, and carries it in pursuit of His intoxicating perfumes, as thirst brings the stag to the beautiful springs of living waters. God came to the world to cast fire on the earth, and immediately the earth began to smoke and burn in all its four quarters, and the powerful flames of these divine conflagrations are daily extended through all regions. Love explains the inexplicable, and man believes through love what appears incredible, and does what appears impossible to do, for love smooths and makes everything possible.

The great apostle, the master of the art of love, said: "One thing alone I desire to understand, Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;" which was the same as to say — I want to know all, and to know all, I want to know only Jesus Christ; for in Him are united all knowledge and all things; and then he added: — and Him crucified: he did not say, I want to know Christ transfigured and glorious; no, for it avails little to know Him in His omnipotence, assisting in thought at the marvelous work of universal creation, nor does it suffice to know Him in His glory when His countenance glitters with uncreated light, and the powers of heaven are absorbed in admiration before the divine throne; nor does he wish to see Him when He is pronouncing the unappealable decrees of His justice surrounded by His angels. The apostle with an assuageable thirst, unsatisfied hunger, and invincible desire, longs and asks for more, he mounts higher in daring thought; for he is only content with knowing

Christ crucified, for to know Him thus is to know Him in the act of His incomprehensible and infinite love. Him only did those privileged men want to know, who took up their cross, and marched on, carefully laying down their feet wherever they saw the track of His footsteps crimsoned with His blood. Him only did those chaste virgins want to know, who, laying all concupiscence at His feet, took Him for spouse, and consecrated to Him their pure virginal thoughts. Him alone all those want to know who, turning their eyes into fountains, receive tribulations with heartfelt joy, and ascend the rugged mount of penance.

SIN

God in His Almighty power so balanced the foundations of the universe, He so measured the wants of creatures according to their respective nature, that a concerted harmony existed among them. A perfect equilibrium of all things existed. From the attraction or repulsion of particles of matter to the universal movement of the great orbs in the heavens all things are ordained and fitted to each other in number, weight and measure. Through this perfect order and harmony all things moved directly towards God with a regulated motion and with an absolute subordination to a Supreme Being. From the first cry of the new-born babe to the lofty contemplation of the theologian, God has disposed ascensions in the heart of man, from earth towards the gates of heaven, and from the gates of heaven to His eternal Presence. We, even in our fallen state, feel the attraction and our impulse thither.

The angel, a pure spirit inflamed with love, gravitated towards God with a vehement and amorous gravitation. Man, less perfect, but not less amorous, followed with his gravitation the movement of the angel. Matter itself agitated by a secret movement of ascension followed the gravitation of spirits towards the Supreme Maker who drew all things to Himself with-

out effort. All creatures came into existence with the inclination and the capacity of being transformed, and of ascending on the immense ladder which, beginning in the lowliest beings, ended in that Sublime Being who is above all beings, and whom the heavens and the earth, men and angels, know by a name which is above all names. The physical world desired to rise and become spiritualized in a certain way like man, and man desired to become more spiritualized than the angel, and the angel to assimilate itself more to that perfect Being, the Source of all life, the Creator of all creatures, whose height no rule can measure, and whose immensity no bounds can contain.

This concerted harmony could not be disturbed except by a free and intelligent being. Lucifer disturbed it in heaven, and man disturbed it on earth. When sin invades the soul, its heavenly beauty is disfigured, its bloom has faded, its freshness withered, it has become colorless. Of all the mysteries the most terrible is that of liberty, which constitutes man the master of himself, as well as associates him with the Divinity in the ruling and in the government of all things human. This liberty gave to him the faculty of selecting between rebellion and obedience towards his God, and thus conferred on him the faculty of staining the immaculate beauty of creation, by substituting disorder for disorder, perturbation for harmony, evil for good. From this doctrine we can see the origin of sin. Liberty is the faculty of willing and understanding. God is perfectly free, because His understanding and His will is perfect. Man is not per-

fectly free because he is not gifted with an infinite and perfect understanding and will. This imperfection of his liberty consists in the faculty of pursuing evil and embracing error. Now when man was created by God he understood the good; and because he understood it, and because he willed it, he executed it. And by executing the good that his intellect understood and his will desired, he was free. When Eve listened to the voice of the fallen angel her understanding became immediately obscured and her will weakened. On that instant her liberty, which was not distinct from her understanding or her will, became impaired. When she passed from the culpable contemplation to the culpable act, her understanding suffered a great darkness, and her will a profound weakness. She dragged Adam with her, and human liberty became miserably enfeebled, in consequence of which the world burns in discords and is deafened with the loud shrieks of man battling against God and his fellow men. Evil has its origin in the use made of the faculty of choosing, by either adhering to the truth or separating from the truth, by either adhering to the good or separating from the good. When the understanding of our first parent, by his first sin, withdrew from the divine understanding, this withdrawal was equivalent to separating from truth; separated from truth it ceased to understand it. When the human will of our first parent withdrew from the divine will, this withdrawal was equivalent to separating from the good; separated from the good it ceased to will it. Having ceased to will it, it

ceased to execute it, and as man could not cease to exercise the intimate and permanent faculties of his soul, he continued to understand, to will, and to act. Separated from God what he understood was not the truth, error which is the negation of truth was then the term of his understanding, evil which is the negation of good, was then the term of his will, and what he did was not good, then the term of his actions was sin. But as sin could not change the essence of things, nor deprive them of their excellence, it deprived them of their sovereign harmony in which their divine Maker left them after He called them forth from chaos to existence. The wells were poisoned, the fountain vitiated, and what flowed from them was muddy and corrupt. Man having ceased to gravitate towards his God with his understanding, his will and his works, constituted himself his center, and the ultimate end of his understanding, his will, and his actions; and immediately disorder commenced in the highest link of the chain of created beings and was communicated from one to another. And accordingly that tendency inherent in all creatures to arise and ascend to the throne of God was changed to a tendency to sink to a nameless abyss.*

How far the ravages of sin have gone, and to what extent the whole face of creation has been disfigured is a matter beyond human investigation, but it is above all doubt that our first parents were deprived of their hitherto enjoyable state of happiness, stript

* I owe a great deal to Bishop Ullathorne and Donoso Cortes for the above.

of their supernatural gifts and condemned to death with all their posterity. The privation of those heavenly gifts caused in our first parents a degradation in the spirit or soul by pride, and in the flesh by concupiscence. Sin produced a moral and a physical disorder; the moral disorder consisted in the ignorance of the understanding and the weakness of the will, and the physical disorder produced by sin consisted in sickness and death. Nor did this great perturbation produced by sin end here, as not only Adam became subject to sickness and death, but the earth was cursed on his account and in his name. The inferior creation was deteriorated. "Cursed is the earth in thy work; with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth out of which thou wast taken, for dust thou art and into dust thou shalt return."

The disturbance caused by this prevarication was deep and profound. The first breath of air that blows on him, or the first ray of light that strikes on him is the first declaration of war by external things. All his vital powers rebel against the pressure of pain, and his whole existence is concentrated in a sob. Man was more deeply and radically disordered than the rest of creation. Labor, blasted hopes, and death with their innumerable progeny of evil were scattered from the hand of the Most High to the currents of air that encircle our globe: the sighs of broken

friendship, the wails of disconsolate mothers over their departed babes, and the sobs of loving children by the death-bed of their parents mingle into one dreadful, unbroken groan of woe which forms the dirge of humanity in its lamentations over the loss of its innocence. From the cabin of the poor to the palace of the rich the dismal shadow of sorrow has fallen; misery in its hydra form coils around the king and the peasant; amidst poverty, sickness, and want, for man there is no peace but the tomb. When he had separated from his God, all his powers separated at once one from the other constituting themselves so many divergent centers. His understanding lost its authority over his will, the flesh escaped from the obedience it owed the spirit, and the spirit fell into the slavery of the flesh. All had been previously concord and harmony in man before his act of obedience, but all afterwards were war, tumult, contradictions and discord. Without other help than that of the divine mercy man was exposed to the impetuous current of all physical ills and moral tortures. His life became all temptation and battle, his wisdom all ignorance, his will all weakness, his flesh all corruption. Every one of his actions was accompanied with a regret; every one of his pleasures had bitter dregs; his illusions were counted by his hopes; and his griefs by his desires. His memory served as a torture; his prevision as a disappointment; his imagination only to throw fringes of purple and gold over his nakedness and misery. Enamored of the good to which he was born he pursued the path of evil on

which he entered, and feeling the necessity of a God he fell into the unfathomable abyss of all superstitions. Condemned to suffer who will be capable of counting his misfortunes; condemned to labor with fatigue who knows the number of his toils; condemned to perpetual sweat on his brow who can number the drops that fall from that brow! Place man as high as you wish, or as low as you may and nowhere will he be exempt from that penalty which came to him from the first sin. If calumny does not reach him who is high envy will, and if envy does not reach him who is low calumny does. Who was ever so high that he did not fear to fall, and who ever believed so firmly in the constancy of fortune that he did not dread its reverses! Our life is full of grief and death full of terror. Pain is the inseparable companion of life in this obscure valley filled with our sighs, deafened with our lamentations, and moistened with our tears. We come into the world when we are born with our arms crossed on our breast in a penitent posture, and opening our eyes for the first time we open them to weep, for our first salute is a sob. Yes, we come into the world with a cry of pain and leave it with a groan which saddens those who see us die: and between the two Extremes of life's journey, the cradle and the tomb, man passes along dragging a heavy chain of disappointments, cares, griefs, and sorrows.

The perturbation caused by the sin of Adam did not end in Adam and Eve with their posterity becoming subject to sickness and death, and to all the evils

that flesh is heir to, but the earth was cursed on their account and in their name. As everything in this world was made for man, and as man himself is the object and end of all that is in the world, we must expect that when man underwent so great a change for the worse, all things destined for his use or pleasure would undergo a change adapted to his altered position. The earth was changed that man might have to toil in the sweat of his brow, and that the toil might be the medicine of his life as well as of his mortal body. The perturbation then produced by sin was and should be general, was and should be common to the high and low regions, to those of all spirits and to those of all bodies. The earth bristled with thorns and weeds, its herbs dried up, its plants were parched, its trees withered, and it covered itself with dark and impenetrable forests. Its fountains ceased to distill sweet liquor, it was consumed by heat and nipped by frost, and its four corners were deafened with the roar of impetuous whirlwinds, tornadoes, and hurricanes, the heavens became leaden and rained down its torrents to damage his crops. Entire nature was as it were possessed with a mad fury against man, the seas on beholding him approach tossed their waves wildly, the mountains raised their tops on high to stop his path, the flowers armed themselves with thorns against him, the reptiles spat their venom at him, at every step we dread an ambuscade, and in every ambuscade, death.

So wonderful is the consonance between the disor-

ders of the physical and moral worlds that the human race proclaims it with one voice without comprehending it, as if a supernatural and invincible power obliged it to bear testimony to the great mystery. The voice of tradition, the sentiments of all peoples, the echoes of the whole world, all tell us mysteriously of a great physical and moral disorder which happened in times anterior to the dawn of history in consequence of a primitive fault. Even yet if by chance the elements become disordered and there are strange phenomena in the celestial spheres, and great visitations of pestilence and famine, if the seasons change their placid course and be confounded and battle with one another, if the earth be convulsed with earthquakes, if the winds freed from the reins that curbed their impetuosity blow into hurricanes, then rises from the people, the guardians of tremendous tradition, a persistent and tremulous voice which seeks the cause of the unusual disturbance in a crime sufficient to enrage the Divinity and bring on the earth the maledictions of heaven. Nor is history wanting in remarkable examples which come in support of this universal tradition transmitted from father to son, from family to family, from race to race, for when crime has risen to a certain level and has filled its measure, then tremendous catastrophies have visited nations and rude shocks disturbed the world. First of all occurred that universal perversion of which the Holy Scriptures tell us when all men joined in the same apostasy, and in the same forgetfulness of God, lived without other good, and without other law than their criminal pleasures and their frantic

passions; to such a fetid state of corruption was humanity then reduced that an expression of sorrow was heard from the lips of the Creator that He created man, and when the cup of divine wrath was filled the angels opened the cataracts of heaven and there burst forth that portentous inundation of water that swept man from the face of the earth and buried everything in universal ruin. Again, does not the terrible tale of Sodom and Gomorrah bear a living testimony to this great truth? two cities that wallowed in the mire of impurity. God could no longer refrain from showing His scourge of justice; He rained down fire from heaven upon them and burned them to a cinder. When the Desired of all nations came to the world, the time of His coming was remarkable above all for the perversity of man, and for the universal corruption of morals. The angel of evil stalked with diabolical pomp upon the earth, matter enshrouded the spirit, and the whole world became polluted. Evil and good struggled but the demon triumphed. Man's heart became an outlet whereby his soul strayed away from things divine to feed on the husks of the earth. To this was added that one day of sad and tearful memory, the most sad and tearful of all that passed since creation. A people blind and maddened with frenzy took its God in its hands, seeing Him so poor, so meek and so humble, it outraged His poverty, it mocked His meekness, and despised His humility. Secretly agitated by the infernal furies it made Him drain to the very dregs the chalice of infamy in Pilate's hall, and of ignominy by murdering Him betweeen two thieves on

the cross. Then again the cup of divine wrath flowed over, and the union between the moral and physical world is seen. At the moment of His death the earth began to rumble and quake as though a great agitation rocked it. The brilliant sun had deadened, the sky had taken a coppery color, all the world was blackening fiercely, lurid redness gashed the heavens, it was as if they had been splashed with blood." A deadly darkness swept down upon the crosses, a roar that was neither tempest, nor thunder, occupied the air, the darkness deepened to fright. Then the lips of the earth opened and spoke. The earthquake tore the rocks of Golgotha, and the walls of the city reeled, the tombs in ancient burial places were loosened and sepulchers left open to the reeling gaze."

This wonderful consonance so evident between the physical and moral world, between sin and punishment, in the history of the human race taken collectively, is also visible in the individual sinner as the drama of life unfolds itself to our view. The sinner may rebelliously break through the moral laws framed by the Creator, and by so doing satiate his animal propensities upon poisonous passions abhorred by the laws of nature, he may roam wildly in defiance of heaven's decrees until marked by the scars of crime and infamy which reveal his servitude to the demon of his passions; he may bend the knee to the Baal of sin and adore the Prince of Darkness, but the hour will come, sooner or later, when he shall hear the accusing voice of the offended Majesty of God thundering from on high, " Thou shalt no longer adore nor serve them, I

am thy Lord thy God, mighty and jealous, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." Oh, bless God if for your crimes you undergo punishment in this life! Bless God if your life is one category of miseries crushing you and humbling you to the earth. Bless God if famine or pestilence visit you in punishment of sin. Better to suffer temporary pain here while buffeted and dashed against the rocks of a cold and shelterless world, than to await the chastisement of God in the world to come. It is a dreadful consideration to dwell on, that while we are assembled here in the temple of God, there is some place in His creation, a place where crime is punished, a place that is the object of all horror and of all dread, where there is insatiable thirst without alleviation, perpetual hunger without satisfaction, where the eyes never see, where the ears never hear aught but the source of pain, where all is agitation without repose, weeping without intermission, grief without consolation. A place with one door of entrance, but none of escape. On its threshold are written these words, "Hope dies and memory becomes immortal."

SIN AND ITS FIRST PUNISHMENT

In all the dynasties that preceded the creation of man, no matter how insignificant or low they may be, all in their respective kingdoms, in their quiet and unobtrusive beauty are worthy of the God that formed them. To be low and insignificant was not to be guilt-stained. But when we pass over the line and come into the human period, into that kingdom of responsibility, we find a different state of things. Lowness here means not innocence, inferiority means moral depravity. This is a problem startling and perplexing, and worthy of attention and scrutiny. Where are we to go to look for an explanation of this fact? In that freedom of man's will, which, while it rendered man capable of working with God for the elevation and the development of both himself and his fellow man, also conferred on him the ability of choosing not to cooperate with God.

When we compare man with those creatures that occupy the lowest dynasties, we find that he is less true to his proper end and destiny than these inferior animals, for they pursue unerringly their several instincts while man fails to work out his. We see this occurring every day. Man enjoying the gift of free-will, may sink into sensual gulfs both bodily and mentally, or enrich himself with the treasures of virtue. He

may, if he pleases, yield to the ignoble solicitations of appetite and become a most destructive factor in shortening the days of his own life, and as a parent be a corrupt and venal source of an immoral and worthless offspring, or he may, by denying himself many an insidious and brutal indulgence, become a healthy member of society and the father of a useful and comforting family. This is the history of the human race with its light and shade, its waifs and stragglers, as well as its strong and healthy on the onward march of time and life. Man is the great deteriorator as well as the builder of man.

When a child is traveling along a lonesome road at night it sees objects ahead and immediately the active imagination pronounces these objects to be some specter or goblin lying in wait to devour it. But when we approach the object that was of such dread, we find it only imaginary. This is an illustration of how we materialize things that have no existence. In this instance it is the mind that is in fault; it gives its assent to an image of the imagination. In like manner when we take imaginary error for actual truth, and take imaginary evil for actual good, in both these cases it is our will that is at fault. It gives its assent to an image of the imagination, as though it was some real truth, and its assent to some imaginary good as if it were some real good. From this it follows that our will, through its assent, is the source of evil.

If you enter a dark room with a lighted candle in your hand you dispell the darkness, but it does not follow from your appearance with the lighted taper that

you evicted from that room something real and substantial. When you pour water out of a cup and emptiness remains, you would not say that emptiness was something real, positive, and substantial: well, darkness bears the same relation to light as emptiness does to fullness, darkness is nothingness just as emptiness is nothingness. When you see your shadow on the ground, you would not say that it is anything real, there is no life in it, although your form is there, and if you move your arm, or any other part of your body, that part represented in the shadow will also move. Now when we speak of good and evil, of error and truth, both evil and error have no real existence, they have no substance. They are just like darkness, emptiness, or the shadow. Darkness is the absence of light, emptiness is the absence of fullness, and a shadow is the absence of reality. Let us apply this form of definition to evil and error, and we find evil to be the privation of good, and error to be the negation of truth.

Suppose from the absence of light an accident occurs to us during a dark night, we attribute the accident to the darkness; and if we feel hungry from the want of food we attribute the cause of our hunger to hunger, as if darkness and hunger were real, substantial and positive causes. In like manner we confound the pains and sufferings brought on us by evil as evil were something real and substantial. We must not materialize what has no existence.

There are three kinds of evil. First, there is natural evil which consists in the absence or privation in the

individual of some good which belongs to the species. It is a defect of nature. Second, there is moral evil or sin which consists in the defect or privation of rectitude in the will of an intelligent creature. It is a defect or falling off from the will of God. Third, there is penal evil, or the evil of punishment, which is the privation of good, because of moral evil. The first cause of all these is the human will. The human will is defective whenever it is out of its own order, for example. We often read of disease festering in the slums of cities, caused by the accumulation of filth, where not only the streets and alleys but the houses reek with dirt. The very atmosphere becomes surcharged and polluted with the noxious gases that rise from this cesspool of creeping corruption. The unhappy people dwelling in those sordid stys of vermin look more like specters from the grave than human beings. The threatening scourge appears; it is merciless; an epidemic breaks out accompanied with all its customary horrors; death triumphs, and thousands are swept coffinless into untimely graves. Dirt is the first cause of the epidemic. But dirt as the festering cause of disease is only matter in the wrong place. Allow it to accumulate and remain about a human dwelling and it will destroy life; spread it over the land to fertilize it and it will produce plants and fruits and thereby support life. Dirt, therefore, is good in itself when it is in the right place, and an evil when in the wrong place. Now the will of man, good in itself, is good when it adheres to justice, but evil when it falls from justice and sinks down to things that are unjust

and disorderly. In this circumstance it looses its purity and becomes defiled with sin.

Now if sin consists in the defection of the human will, it must be a defection from something good in which it exists, a falling off from something good to which it was attached. For example: Sickness is the privation of health, but it corrupts the body, yet what remains of the body is good; a wound is the privation of soundness, but it corrupts the limb. So is it with souls. The vices which are the wounds and sickness of the soul are the privations of virtues and cannot exist of themselves without some good of nature remaining in which they exist. It only corrupts but does not destroy our nature. Souls in sin are, therefore, good in what they are, and in what they have. They are evil by their failure from justice and the corruption in consequence of that failure. They are depraved by falling from good affections and from good actions; by deserting the Supreme Good for which they were made; and by abandoning the good order which should regulate, beautify, and perfect their nature and lead them onwards to their Supreme Good. When man sins the wings of his soul are clogged with mire of his sinful life and he cannot fly to the bright regions of good or truth. He is riveted to the things beneath him and he wallows in their mire. The bright image of his Maker that is on his soul is blurred by the criminal stainings of his concupiscence. And while in this state of moral disease we are moral lepers, and should cry aloud in the words of the leper, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

When we commit a sin, sin passes away in the act, but the effect of that act remains, and that effect is guiltiness; to this guiltiness punishment is attached. When man wishes to know the affections or ill-will, the love or hatred hidden in his fellowman's heart, he looks in his face and endeavors to read there the feelings or language of his heart. When man wishes to know what internal motives actuate his fellow-man's deeds, he watches his actions and from them he forms a judgment of his motives. But God has no need to have recourse to this fallible and slow process of discovery. He sees the secrets of man's soul directly. When the accused is arraigned before the court of human justice, the internal conscience of that accused is closed against the inspection of the prosecutors, and the presumed malice is inferred from his outward act. But before the eye of God the whole interior soul is laid open, and the guilt measured by the intention. According to human judgment the guilt must be proved by external acts before punishment is awarded, but according to divine judgment the guilt is established by the interior act and the proof of that act is recorded in the conscience and there in that conscience the first punishment begins.

After the committal of a crime we feel our soul troubled and distressed by an internal discord, we know that we are deformed internally, and in order to cover up that deformity of soul we have recourse to excuses, to fencings, and maskings. This was the feeling of our first parents after their sin, and it is our conduct, too, when we violate the laws of God. After

crime we realize that we are severed from truth and justice, that those spiritual cords that held us to God snapped, and down we fell into the deep depths of a degraded state. There in that state we feel a dreariness, a loneliness, a vacancy that fill us with remorse and bitterness. These pangs of a rebuking conscience have been justly called "the worm of remorse," "the sting of conscience," "the iron lute of sin." They will follow you everywhere, shake them off you cannot, they are glued to you, they are riveted to you, you are bolted down beneath their crushing weight. Clothe yourself with burnished steel, and the sting, the bite, the fang and pang of a rebuking conscience will pierce it. No matter how profound you may sleep the sleep of unconsciousness, the nightmare of your crime will haunt you, its awful specter will appear, and that apparition will make you tremble. "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." Lock yourself up in a cell, bar all communication from the outward world to that cell; bury yourself in a cave far away from the haunts of men, be it in a trackless desert, or in the mountain's chasm; are you alone there? No, there is one that is always by your side speaking to you, and his language is the language of all tongues; his eloquence is unequaled whether it be approving or condemning. That companion is your conscience. Let your voice be the voice of thunder, but the voice of conscience will be heard above it accusing you, condemning you, punishing you. If all the voices of the human race formed a universal chorus and pleaded in your favor to license a misdeed, they could not calm a troubled conscience.

Its voice will rise above all and condemn us, it will strike us, it will pierce us, its inexorable judgment will crush every lie told to exonerate us. "The sin of Juda is written with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond on the tablet of the heart." "Pride may cloud and darken the mind, sensuality may blunt our sensibilities, as we know habits of sin do, and even go so far as to benumb and paralyze the soul, and weaken to a certain extent the powers of the conscience, but to kill it, to extinguish its light, their attempts are futile, for its stern and severe tones of condemnation will be heard forever.

> "What exile from himself can flee?
> To zones though more and more remote
> Still, still pursues, where'er I be,
> The blight of life — the demon Thought."

Conscience will leave you no rest, no peace of soul until you repent and return to Him whom you have offended. Listen. Listen to that voice calling you to reprehend and punish in yourself what you believe God would reprehend and punish; by this action you will arrest the avenging hand of your avenging Judge. A sharp and sudden shock of a visitation may burst the thick crust that armored your soul, and lay it bare to the sting of conscience. Listen to its voice, for death may come quicker than repentance; then drops the veil, and there stands the soul with its dark record before the judgment seat of God with conscience as its witness.

PUNISHMENT OF SIN CONTINUED

We have seen that conscience is the first whip that scourges the sinner. It is the first court of justice where we writhe and wriggle under its heavy strokes. And would to God that the punishment of sin ended there, but it is not so, for the whole life of our Saviour is teeming with warnings of the dreadful punishment that awaits the impenitent sinner.

When the Infant Jesus was brought into the temple, there was nothing about His outward appearance to distinguish Him from all other children. He exhibited no indication of strength or power. His language is the language of a baby — tears. We see in Him no mark of wealth or greatness. His mother who bears Him in her arms, and nourishes Him with her milk, is poor and humble. A poor artisan accompanies Him and acts as a father to Him. These form His retinue. Who could refrain from believing that He is some obscure infant whose life would be attended with as little splendor as His birth, and would never exert the slightest influence upon the destinies of mankind.

In the meantime a holy sage enters the temple. No sooner does he behold this Infant, who was so feeble in appearance, than he penetrates by faith through those veils behind which the majesty of God lay con-

cealed and adores the son of the virgin as the son of God. He takes this Infant in his arms, and exclaims in the excess of his joy, that all he desires now is to die, because his eyes beheld Him who was destined to be the glory of His people, the light of nations, the elevation of the world. Then looking through the mist of future ages, and beholding at one view all the effects which the coming of the Redeemer should produce on earth — all the prodigies which His justice and His mercy would effect through the course of time — he comprised them in a short and prophetic sentence addressed to Mary the mother of the Infant. "Behold this child is set for the fall and resurrection of many in Israel."

In these prophetic words a light is let in that reveals the true history of this mysterious Infant, and His relation to the world. It shows us this Infant, although covered with swaddling clothes, to be the Master of the world, and the inexorable Judge of the human race; that upon Him alone should depend the loss or the salvation, the elevation or downfall of men and nations; that upon Him alone must depend the destinies of the universe for the time to come. The literal fulfillment of that great prophecy is exhibited to our view in the history of nations where we see Jesus Christ exercising an undivided sovereignty over the world, disposing of scepters and crowns with absolute authority, exalting or deposing sovereigns, creating or crushing dynasties and empires according to the dictates of His will — choosing and rejecting whomsoever He pleases — overturning with His almighty hand

whatever opposes His designs — supporting His immortal work against the efforts of hell — proving in a word that it belongs to Him to plant or uproot, to build up or to destroy, to give life or death as each seems good to His divine will.

While absorbed in the contemplation of the spiritual power which Jesus Christ invisibly exercises upon the heart of man by the sweet secrets of His grace, we are apt to pass over that authority which He enjoys as supreme Master and Ruler of kings and peoples, an authority before which all human societies must bow down in obedience, and whose voice every member of society must irresistibly listen to. No matter how revolutionary, how revolting, how stormy the human passions of men be, they must conform to its ultimate end. I wish to direct your attention to this visible reign of God amid these commotions, and by unfolding the leaves of history we will be confronted with facts which reveal to us that the fate of those who obstinately resist Jesus Christ is to perish, while victory is the crown for those who fight beneath His banner. Such is the picture I wish to place before you, the ruin of those nations, sovereigns, and individuals who declared themselves the enemies of Christ and His Church.

"Woe to Corozain and Bethsaida because they had not been converted by miracles that would have brought even Tyre and Sidon to do penance, and thou Capharnaum which art exalted unto heaven thou shalt be thrust down to hell." The words of our Saviour are a cry of pain upon the unbelief of the inhabitants

of these cities, and in this province. He justifies this judgment upon these on account of the unbelief of the inhabitants and their stubbornness towards God Himself. He says that the judgment upon these cities was on account of their rejection of His messengers, who are His representatives by virtue of their mission. "He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me." The result of the Nazarene's curse has been fulfilled to the letter; it is shown by the barren and sterile appearance of the country surrounding lake Genesareth. In the days of our Saviour, glowing with life, it bloomed and blossomed like a flower garden, but it is no longer the fair and fragrant garden; shady trees, palaces, towns have vanished, thistles and ruins mark the former sites of Corozain and Bethsaida. Nothing remains but the lake itself still shimmering in the sunlight with its clear lonely surface upon which scarcely a boat rocks to-day. A veil of sadness and desolation hangs over all. Thoughts rush to remind us how terrible it is to reject the word of God and incur His anathemas.

"Ask of me, and I will give to thee the Gentiles for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, and shalt break them in pieces like a potter's wheel. And now, O ye kings, serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and you perish when His wrath shall be kindled." Let us contemplate the fulfilling of that momentous policy in the history of

the Jewish people. They were the first to attest by their downfall the avenging power of their divine King. The history of Israel is a history of waste of God's graces. God cried out again and again and spread His wings over that nation as a mother bird spreads her wings to protect her brood, but the return from that people was in their wanton wickedness to kill His prophets and messengers and finally Himself. Christ in language most scathing points out their stubbornness and contumacy with which they met many tokens of God's favors. Addressing Himself in particular to the Pharisees, He compared them to scoured cups, clean outside but full of filth inside. He compared them to sepulchers which look trim outside when they are whitewashed at Easter, but full of putrefaction within.. He threatens them with terrible punishment. "You serpents, you vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell?" He brings together in one picture all their moral depravity, and with words winged with wrath He hurls the final sentence against them, against their city and their temple. As Prophet, as Judge, and as King He lifted the mysterious veil and proclaimed the ruin of the murderess of God and His prophets. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, but thou wouldst not. Behold your house shall be left to you desolate. For the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee around, and straighten thee on every

side. And beat thee flat to the ground, and the children who are in thee, and they shall not leave a stone upon a stone, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation."

The prediction of Christ forms a most tragic scene in His life. Our Lord, surrounded by His Apostles, sitting on the gentle slope of Mount Olivet, facing the city and temple when their beauty and splendor were bathing in the morning sun, saw vividly how these walls would be blackened, battered, and leveled to the ground. He saw the pretty fresh-cheeked children who now ran by His side, bleeding, charred, and mutilated corpses in the streets of the stormed city. He saw the ominous threatenings and destruction approaching her from all parts of the compass. Our Saviour gazed sadly at the proud and obstinate city. His grief and compassion forced tears from His eyes, and while He was in the midst of the honors and joys of a triumphal procession through the city He heaved heavy sighs.

As Christ predicted, the besieging army came, surrounded the city and left it to feed on itself. So great was the desolation and abomination in Jerusalem from internal distress during the siege that we do not find in the pages of history any other city to have suffered such miseries, nor did any age, from the beginning of the world, ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness than this. To escape from the brawling brutality and cruelties perpetrated on the unhappy inhabitants of the city, thousands rushed through the gates and fled to their enemies; but the Roman sol-

diers out of wrath and hatred they bore the Jews nailed them to crosses until room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies. Famine devoured the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms were filled with women and children dying from hunger, the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged, and the young men wandered about the market places like grim specters from the grave. The starving population was driven to search the common sewers and dunghills of cattle for food. It is recorded by Josephus of a mother taking her child and crying out, "Oh, miserable infant, for whom shall I preserve thee in this war, in this famine, in this sedition! As to the war with the Romans, if they preserve our lives, we must be slaves. This famine will also destroy us. Come on, and be my food, and thou be a pass-word to the world which is now all that is wanting to complete the calamity of us Jews." As soon as she said these words, she slew her son, and then roasted him, and ate part of him, and kept the other part by her concealed. The soldiers entered and smelling the cooked food, threatened to cut her throat immediately if she did not show them what food she had got ready. She replied that she had saved a very fine portion of it for them, and forthwith uncovered what was left of her son. "This is my son," she said, "and what hath been done was my own doing. Come, eat of this food, for I have eaten of it myself. Do not you pretend to be more tender than a woman, or more compassionate than a mother."

No one will shield Israel from the army of Cæsar.

Its blood-guiltiness can only be expiated by the blood of the whole nation. The fatal day came at last. Titus with his conquering legions battered the walls of the city to pieces, set fire to the Temple and plundered everything that came to hand. Those that were caught were slain, nor was there any commiseration for age or sacredness of character. The Jews fled into the houses in order to escape from the merciless soldiers of Titus, the houses were set on fire and every soul in them burned. Some crept into the sewers for shelter, but they were dragged out and slain. The very streets and lanes were clogged up with the dead. The soldiers becoming tired from the butchering in the universal slaughter, received orders from their general to slay only the aged and those who bore arms. Those who were the comeliest in looks he lead away as captives, others he sent to Egypt as slaves, and the remaining he dispatched to various provinces to be the food of wild beasts in the amphitheaters. As soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, Titus gave his final orders to demolish the entire city and temple. Where is that grotesque temple to-day, the precious idol of Israel? Where is that proud and obstinate city to-day? A lonely flower may brighten the wild undergrowth where once they have stood.

There is no necessity in using graphic language to place before you that astonishing dispersion of the Hebrew nation, and which had been so solemnly predicted by Christ and the ancient prophets, and literally fulfilled during the past nineteen centuries, for its

mutilated body chopped into pieces is scattered all over the world exhibiting to every beholder a most remarkable monument of the divine vengeance and the dreadful punishment that follows deicide. Here was a people, the chosen of God, the depositary of the sacred oracles, and of the promises that related to the Messiah, but when that Messiah came they loaded Him with insult and calumny, and seeing Him so weak, so humble, and so poor, they mocked His meekness, despised His humility, and outraged His poverty. They continued their persecution unto death, and were not afraid to ask that His blood should be upon themselves and their children. The dreadful anathema fell as they requested, and ever since that day of sad and tearful memory they are wandering about like Cain-fugitives upon the earth.

The moral order operating on families and nations develops the moral side of man, and when the moral life has been developed in him, the moral law continues its duty in shielding and strengthening him against the opposing influences that tend to break him up and quench his moral life by substituting for it the animal life. When we read the history of the rise and fall of nations, we are forced to observe that as soon as nations give themselves up to their animal instincts and forget the moral side, they will soon be blotted out of living history. And we see on the other hand that those peoples who live up to a high standard of morality, occupy a long-lived history in the pages of the world. Hence the great danger of material prosperity pampering the lower passions of men and na-

tions to such a degree that they will forget the moral law and sink to the lowest abysses of nature. It is in this stage that the tare is sown which later on will embitter the whole nation. This great truth is exemplified in the history of the Roman Empire, and that material prosperity that preceded it. Owing to the brutal use of the immense riches amassed from the plunder of the conquered nations we see the seeds of degeneracy sown, for the condition of the people grew worse as the Republic grew richer. In the history of nations no page is more polluted than those leaves that record the history of the customs and manners of the Roman people. Profligacy and unbridled licentiousness were rampant. Vice in all its forms had its gods and goddesses. The wing of faith and the wing of love became conglutinated with the slime of concupiscence and were glued to the things of the earth. Man's heart became an outlet through which his soul strayed away from things divine to feed on the husks of the earth. The cup of iniquity was filled, and the divine vengeance came. Where, I ask, is that great Empire to-day? Where is that proud Roman Eagle that flapped its golden wings from the Euphrates to the Thames over the defeated hosts of its enemies? The finger of time dipped in dust has written its epitaph upon its enormous skeleton. Not a remnant of that Empire is extant to-day save what we see in the broken columns of its Forums, triumphal arches, and the crumbling galleries of its amphitheaters, where "man was slaughtered by his fellow man," and "butchered

to make a Roman holiday" amid the satanic orgies of a lewd and distracted people.

In the midst of the crash of crumbling empires, surfeited and intoxicated by reason of their triumphs over conquered nations, is heard the trumpet-tongued voice of God through His Church on earth, and in threatening language warns the individual, the family, the nation, that if they violate His law and set up for worship the idols of their passions, they must expect His dreadful anathemas. And no effort on the part of man will ever prevail in hushing to silence that voice. It has been heard in every age by all peoples and by all classes. It spoke to Cain the first murderer, to Judas Iscariot, and to the last enrolled on the calendar of the sanctified. The king on his throne of glittering gold heard it and still hears it. The busy merchant hears it, and no matter how loud the hum of his machinery may be, its voice is still louder. We can't stifle its stern and piercing tones. We hear it in those calm intervals between the acts of our roistering revelries before the curtain of life is rung down, warning us to curb the reins of sin and passion. To you whose days are in the yellow leaf, to you whose brow is commencing to show the furrows of time, to you whose cheeks wear the autumnal hue of decay, I say to you if you are still dishonest become honest, if you are impure become pure, if you are selfish, avaricious, uncharitable, become charitable, and love thy Lord with thy whole heart and thy neighbor as thyself for the love of God.

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

We see legislators in all times and in all countries making laws for the good government of the people, and administrators of those laws inflicting punishment on those who violate them. The history of nations tells us of esteem and contempt, of love and hatred, of reward and punishment. We see men crowned with laurels in hero-worship, and crime punished in others. This is the basis of our social organization. Among civilized nations a man is not condemned without a hearing. Witnesses are summoned to show how much premeditation is in the crime, and the criminal is punished according to the degree of premeditation and the nature of the offense.

Every man owes loyalty and good conduct to the society of which he is a member. But if instead of doing good he does evil to society; if he troubles its order with disorder; if he disturbs its rights with injustice he owes a debt of justice to the common good, and has to expiate his evil with punishment in order that his disorder may be rectified by another kind of order, imposed on him against his will. It is here where human justice comes in and through the instrumentality of punishment becomes a provident regulation of evil. But if the evil that man commits be a

mortal offense, destructive of society or its members, such an evil is beyond a temporal remedy, and the good of society demands that he be cut off from it by exile or death. This course of punishment is adopted towards criminals for the purpose of deterring them from like evils and to purify society. There are therefore two kinds of punishment in human justice, one a temporal chastisement in vindication of justice, and directed to the amendment and recovery of the criminal, the other a final separation from the good, both for the vindication of justice and to protect the good from incurable evil. That awful punishment is as everlasting as the soul, because God is just to the eternal order of things, because it is due to the nature of things, because the fear of like evils may keep other men from evil, and because after the probation of the just is ended society must be kept pure and holy evermore.

When man becomes a deserter from the ranks of God's army, he commits treason against the majesty and divine sovereignty of God, he commits ingratitude against the divine Goodness, and is an abuser of God's gifts. He deserts God of his own free-will, and if he perseveres in this desertion to the end of his life, he loses all claim to freedom; the power of choice is withdrawn; the sun of his probational life has set; he has forever made his choice of apostasy from the Infinite and Eternal Good for which he was made, and that choice is final, it is irrevocable. There is a gulf between that soul and God that never can be bridged, because the communion between that soul and God has

been utterly broken down by the voluntary act of the soul herself.

In the judging of the unjust soul, the acts of the will are the evidence; God and the conscience are the witnesses. Separated from the world and self-condemned, separated from God and condemned of God, the immortal soul of the sinner departing in its sins, can only be consigned to where malice, and darkness, and disorder are everlasting.

Before this final separation takes place the soul stands before the bar of divine Justice; the acts of the will are evidences of the soul's transgressions of the law; hide them as you may, cover them up in darkness as dark as hell itself, one day they will be bared and appear in all their heinousness. Two witnesses confront you, they cannot be bribed, they cannot be corrupted, you cannot silence them, they will speak, and when they speak they will speak the truth. Conscience is the first witness, "the firmament of the soul," far and away more clear and beautiful than the vault of the natural heavens. "Conscience, Conscience," cried Rousseau, "divine instinct, heavenly and immortal voice, unerring guide of beings, ignorant and limited, yet intelligent and free." What guilty soul has not heard her stern and severe tones speaking within him with unspeakable groanings? What guilty soul has not felt its arrows pierce her? "Here is a pain," says Juvenal, "which surpasses the torments of Cedítius, and Radamanthus, namely, the bearing about within us night and day the witness of our crime." Domitian hidden in his palace, like a wild beast in his

cave, "cannot escape the invisible executioner." Why did Œdipus tear out his eyes after his incestuous crime? Because his conscience smote him. Why did Orestes think the Furies were ever after him? Because of his guilty conscience. Why did Lady Macbeth, when she saw the stains of blood on her hands, exclaim, "Out, damned spot, out!"? Because her conscience smote her.

There is another dreadful witness to our sinful deeds, the ever-watchful eye of the invisible Master. It is that God whose soft and whispering voice caused the Prophet Elias to cover his face with his mantle and remain silent and motionless. "No creature is invisible in his light, but all things are naked and open to His eyes," says St. Paul. And St. John gives expression to the same idea in these words, "The sinner rises from his bed at night, despising his own soul, and saying, who seeth me? Darkness compasseth me about and the walls cover me, whom do I fear? and he knoweth not that the eyes of the Lord are brighter than the sun beholding all the ways of men, and looking into the hearts of men." An Arabian proverb says, In the black night God sees the black ant on the black marble.

Belief in eternal punishment is not confined to Christians alone, it was the creed of the Gentile world also, and the universal and constant doctrine of all men. It is an historical fact which no one familiar with the traditions, the records of the human race will venture to deny. False forms of worship differ from the true, but in determining the pains of hell they are

in accord with Christianity in admitting their eternity. Superstition speaks on it alike with reason, tradition alike with philosophy, Virgil and Ovid alike with St. Paul, Mythology alike with the Gospel. Fable may become blurred in traditional transmission, passions have crushed out many doctrines that condemned their indulgence, but they have never been able to obscure or destroy the universal and constant belief of humanity in eternal punishment. Whence comes this marvelous concurrence of mankind in all ages upholding a doctrine so opposed to the rebellious tendencies of human passions? Either it is a general tradition descending from one primeval divine revelation, or it is the testimony of nature, the voice of conscience which speaks always the same language, and whose verdict, uniform in character, permanent in duration, and universal in extent, is a plain guarantee of the truth it conveys, for the consent of all nations cannot bear witness to falsehood.

Reason does not invent that which it does not comprehend. Finite reason does not invent infinite conceptions. The reason of man cannot comprehend eternal punishment, therefore it cannot invent it. Moreover, eternal punishment is a dreadful punishment that desolates the mind, aggrieves and terrifies the heart. Now humanity is too miserable and too corrupt to be capable of inventing of itself, or of being able to accept or retain without repugnance, and with such accord and uniformity, a belief that menaced all its vices, that embittered all its pleasures, that disturbs all its passions. This belief, therefore,

that has existed from the creation of man down to our time, does not exist, nor could it exist, unless it was born with the world. Man has not invented it, but received it from a superior reason. It is not the offspring of human intelligence, but a divine revelation that God gave to the first man and propagated it through tradition in all men, and by a force wholly divine is maintained independently of man's limited intelligence and corruption of heart.

The presumptuous and impious assert that eternal punishment cannot be reconciled with the infinite goodness of God. We have a satisfactory reply to this false teaching in the language of the rich glutton who was condemned to hell on account of his harsh and unmerciful treatment of poor Lazarus.

From the days of David to our time men were found who had no other principle save that of error, no other logic save that of their passions, and accordingly attempt to draw from the divine attributes an argument that would place in doubt the divine threats, but the rich glutton refutes their reasoning. Abraham, from whom he craves a slight relief, an insignificant alleviation of his torments, announces to him in clear terms, that every form of communication from hell to heaven is impossible, and that he must suffer the same torments for all eternity. What does the rich glutton say when he hears this dreadful announcement? He looks on his miserable state in despair and confusion, deplores his blindness, and expresses a wish that others may not follow his example. He does not get angry with God, or make a complaint against any of His

divine attributes. Does it not seem strange that he seeks for some relief instead of asking for a shortening of the time of his suffering? He implores that his friends may be warned of his torment in order that they may not suffer similarly, but does not ask that he be liberated from his prison of pain. The first, therefore, to acknowledge the reasonableness of everlasting punishment are the reprobates who are the victims of it. God's goodness, therefore, is not challenged, but on the contrary, is recognized to be conformable and compatible with the eternity of punishment.

The Incarnation, the passion, and the death of the Son of God for the love of man, was an act of infinite mercy, an infinite remedy that supposed in man some sort of an infinite misery, an infinite evil incurred by him through sin, and therefore supposes an eternal punishment. Because if the object of redemption was to liberate man from a purely transitory and finite evil, it would be impossible to comprehend, or admit, why an Infinite God should die for him, but from the fact that an Infinite God died for the salvation of man, we are constrained to admit that the offense committed by man was infinite in some degree. Now the principles of right reason require that there should be a just, equitable proportion between crime and its punishment, therefore the infinite malice in the sin of man calls for retribution in some manner infinite. But such retribution cannot be infinite in intensity, because the creature man is incapable of an infinite effect, therefore it must be infinite in duration. Hence the

pains of hell, that they bear a just proportion to man's rebellious act against God, must be eternal.

In sin two things have to be considered, its relation to God, and its relation to creatures. Sin under the first aspect implies an infinite disorder, and consequently is an act of measureless malice, for it is an insult against a Being of infinite dignity; it is an outrage against an Infinite Majesty, and a supreme contempt of the Law-giver and His divine laws. Sin considered under the second aspect, that is, in its relation to creatures, which the sinner prefers to God, is evidently finite, because the creatures are finite, and this is the reason why the punishment of sin should be both finite and infinite. It is finite in its intensity, and thus it can be proportionate to the guilt of the creature, the sinner, but it is infinite in duration, without which there would not be the required proportion between crime and its punishment. Take away, then, the dogma of eternal punishment, and the dogma of the Incarnation and the death of the Son of God totters to its base, the doctrine of the economy of redemption, the whole edifice of Christianity would crumble to pieces. There is no repugnance, therefore, between the eternity of punishment and the infinite goodness of God, but, on the contrary, a natural and legitimate consequence, because God is, and has always shown Himself infinitely good to man. When, therefore, man by his ingratitude does not wish to recognize his God, when he does not wish to profit by the infinite love of Jesus Christ, when he does not wish

to obey His Gospel, has, relatively to the offended Deity, an infinite malice and therefore merits an eternal punishment.

In the other life the two societies are divided by an infinite distance. "Between us and you, there is a fixed, a great chaos." So that no one of the blessed can descend to hell, nor any one of the damned ascend to heaven. We have in this world the cities of Jerusalem and Babylon, the cities of God and the devil, the society of the just and sinners in close proximity; there is communication between them, and therefore it is possible to pass from one to the other, because as the principles of error, of corruption, of which the city of the devil is the depositary, can work upon the just and change them into sinners, so in like manner can the principles of truth, of sanctity, of grace, of which the city of God is the depositary, by means of the preaching of the Gospel, and through the sacraments, work on sinners, and change them into the just. During this life, then, as there is not one just, no matter how holy he may be, who may not become a sinner, so on the other hand, there is not one sinner, no matter how perverse he may be, who may not become just. Although every soul in sin may be in the strict sense separated from God, nevertheless, it appertains in some way to God during the present life. He preserves a relationship, a secret affinity with God, because through the Church, which is present and visible to all, he can expiate his crime and receive pardon; he can know God and be illumined by Him; he can be repentant and become full of grace; he can love God

and be loved by Him; he can be restored to the order established by God and reënter and be received into the society of God. But in the other life, there is no possible communication between the city of God and the city of the devil, because of the chaos, because of the infinite distance that divides them. "Between us and you there is a fixed, a great chaos." As no impure breath can rise from hell to darken the serene atmosphere of heaven, so in like manner not even one drop of water which the rich glutton demands, and which has been denied to him can descend to change his condition, to bring him solace in the midst of his torments in hell. From the precious and ineffable fountain of the Blood of the Saviour, at which all sinners on earth can drink, not one drop from this fountain will fall on sinners in hell to save them. And for this reason the Church is continually crying out that the redemption of Jesus Christ so rich, so copious, so abundant, so efficacious on earth, has no effect in hell; and souls once located in either of these places can never change their condition or their abode; none of the blessed can become one of the damned, nor one of the reprobate can become one of the blessed; eternal is the punishment of the damned, as eternal is the bliss of the blessed.

In the gospel narrative of the condemned glutton we find the true image, the correct idea of eternal punishment. It is often asked what is eternity? and the reply comes that one cannot form a true conception, much less explain it. It is He alone, the Eternal Judge, who can reveal to us a true conception of it.

This true image, this correct conception, He has given us when He said it was a great and immovable chaos placed there between heaven and hell by God Himself. Chaos is defined by interpreters as an abyss, an immense, dark, fathomless pit, having no limit to its circumference, no bottom to its profundity, it signifies a shoreless ocean, a distance without an end, a line without an extremity, a heap comprised of things all in confusion and all in horror. See, therefore, what suitable language God uses to express space without a limit, an idea of years without number, of duration without an end, of time without measure. In vain would be the attempt to group numbers by the aid of reckoning, in vain would the mind attempt to travel over all distances, in vain would the imagination pierce all space to form an idea of eternity. Look into the depths of hell and imagine one of the damned to shed one tear every thousand years, and that God would preserve these tears until the whole universe would be inundated, and that then, let us suppose, God would free that soul. In such an hypothesis Juda would have shed only two tears, Esau three, and Cain only one. What millions and millions of years would pass before this church would be filled, what ages would elapse before this city, this state, this country, this world, this universe, the space between our earth and the sun, and the remotest planet. To fill the universe with tears comes within the range of possibilities, but to fill chaos is impossible. This hypothesis desolates the mind, it sinks into despair in its attempted calculation; and if such a proposition could be made to the damned,

what rejoicing would ring in the dark dungeons of hell. And why? No matter how incomprehensible the unaccountable number of ages may be, some day there will come an end. Through the thick mist of time one pale ray, one sickly glimmer of hope would shine. But no, not even if the universe had been inundated a thousand times over, would there be a hope of redemption. Eternity would only be commencing. How long, therefore, must the damned suffer? Always. When shall their punishment cease? Never. Since they have been condemned by the justice of God they have suffered. How will they fare in the future? Suffer. The past does not benefit them, the present does not help them, the future has no promise. Oh, unfruitful past! Oh, bitter present! Oh, desperate future! The revolution of the heavenly bodies divide day and night, and cause the seasons to succeed each other in regulated rotation; with geometrical precision it compiles the years and measures time, but in eternity the spheres remain fixed, immovable, motionless. The heavens are riveted in their poles, the planets sealed in their orbits, all measurement ceases, division and variation of time disappear. There is no sun but the sun of divine justice, and that sun never sets. Perpetual darkness, perpetual misery.

"Let man," says St. Anselm, "go up into the judgment seat of his mind and set himself before his own eyes, and when he has set up judgment in his heart, let his thoughts accuse him, and his conscience be his witness; and let fear be his executioner. Then let the blood of the soul flow in tears on his confes-

sion. Let the image of the future judgment stand before his eyes, and whatever he sees in himself that the Judge to come would reprehend and punish let him punish in himself. For whether sins be little or great, they cannot be passed over unjudged and unpunished. They must be either condemned and punished by the mob, or be judged and avenged by God. But the divine vengeance is stopped when the man is converted, for if we judge ourselves we shall not be judged; by which we understand that we must be punished in this life or in the life to come."

FAITH

"Go, wash in the pool of Siloe, which interpreted, Sent, He went therefore, and washed, and he came seeing."— JOHN 9, 7.

When we look at an object some distance away, we see it but very indistinctly. But if we use a telescope the mechanism of the telescope conquers space and brings the object so apparently near, that its features and outlines become most distinct. No matter how close we view a drop of water we can't detect even one of the millions of infusoria contained in it, but let us look at it through a microscope, and to our amazement we can count myriads of these living animals floating in it. Now what the telescope and microscope are to the eye, faith is to reason. Reason has a much shorter range and a weaker insight into the ways of God than faith. Reason conducts to the door of faith and there delivers us up to a safer guide, a more sublime teacher who opens up a prospect beyond the range of the unassisted eye of reason. Faith gives to reason a light to correct its errors, and enables it to enter with wondering eyes into the revelation of God.

When the light of faith descends on the light of reason, it transforms the soul. It is like the light of the sun stealing on the light of the moon, which must

give way as the sun ascends higher in the heavens. When we view things in moonlight they appear strange and phantom-like, but when sunlight comes these delusions and shadows are dissipated. In like manner, our memory, understanding and will when bathing in this supernatural light become so illumined with its luster that the heavenly mysteries draw nigh to us, and their knowledge perfects our knowledge of earthly truths. With its light there is no longer any doubting. The faculty of reason is so strengthened that it has no longer need to pause and hesitate or waver, it is saved from shipwreck by faith. And as the sun does not rob the moon of its light, neither does faith rob reason of its light, nor oppress our liberty, just as the telescope draws the material objects to our vision without depriving the faculty of seeing of any of its power. Man's intellect is allied to faith; he cannot divorce it. When the rationalist abandons faith for his own reason, he only abandons faith in the divinely mysterious for faith in the mysteriously absurd.

With the exception of the Blessed Virgin, and the Apostles who were endowed with special graces, and illumined with a singular perfection of faith, the faith of the children of Israel was defective and wanting. Nathaniel had to enter into discussions before he believed. The chief of the Synagogue did not believe that Jesus Christ could work miracles unless He was corporally present. Martha, although she believed that Christ could cure the infirm, yet she did not believe that He could raise the dead to life. The Israelite people would not listen to Christ preaching His

heavenly doctrine until they had seen the miracles of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, hence our Lord rebuked them in these words, "You don't believe unless you see signs and prodigies." In the Centurion, however, a military officer, a pagan, without subjecting his mind to a course of reasoning, without seeing a miracle, believes, and adores Christ as God.

The most beautiful, the most gracious, and the most necessary of inanimate things is light. Because, what would this world be without light? No other than a prison of horrors in which man and animals would be chained in the fetters or profound darkness, and would of necessity become extinct. In vain would the Creator have created all things unless He lit up their home with an everlasting lamp. Hence He commenced by creating light first in order to illumine the stupendous series of prodigious creation. And ever since, the sunbeam has been torn into rays and every ray tasked to tell of its ministry. Nature has answered to some of the interrogations, for we have a universal voice passing over all the earth, echoed from animal to animal, from plant to plant, proclaiming that every function of animal and vegetable life is due to the spirits of the sun.

In this material light we see mysteriously and prophetically shining a far more noble and more precious light, the spiritual light of faith, the knowledge of God which has risen with particular brilliancy at the dawn of man's redemption. And as the natural light that illumines bodies is a reflex of the face of God the

Creator, in like manner in the light that lights up the caverns of the soul have we a reflex from the face of God, the Redeemer. The prodigy of this divine light that had illumined the world by the preaching of the gospel was prophesied by the prophet Isaias when he said, "The people that sat in darkness hath seen a great light, and to them who sat in the region of the shadow of death a light has sprung up." Faith is to man what the sun's light and warmth are to the world. If the sun turns away its rays from the earth, streams will cease to flow, and vegetation will cease to grow, and the soil will become inert and lifeless, wrapt up in impenetrable darkness. So is it with the soul that is without faith; it becomes darkened and chilled in its own shadows.

This gift of faith is beautifully illustrated in the miracle of our Lord giving sight to him who was born blind. When our Lord was instructing the Jews in the temple, telling them among many other things, the eternity of His origin, and revealing to them in clear and precise terms His divinity, they were so obstinate in recognizing this remarkable revelation of His divinity that they threatened to stone Him to death. The blindness of their minds was so dense that our Lord Himself could not penetrate it. Christ seeing their stubbornness and obstinacy left the temple; and when outside on the public thoroughfare He met with one who was born blind, as if Providence had so arranged the coincidence that a contrast might be made between the poor blind man, corporally blind from his birth, and the Jews

spiritually blind, who could not see with the eyes of faith the divinity of the Nazarene who was now about to give a grand proof of that divinity.

Come with me in spirit to the Synagogue to learn there from a poor blind man true fortitude, true courage in confessing his belief in Jesus Christ. The Jewish Sanhedrin was composed of all that was most powerful in the nation. In it were the chief high priest, the ecclesiastic princes, the seventy senators judges of life and death, the scribes or interpreters of the law, the Pharisees surrounded by a crowd of insolent followers, who breathed hatred against Christ and those who would speak well of Him. The infamous conspiracy that hatched death to Him became so open that whoever dared to say that Christ was the Messiah was exposed to excommunication by the Synagogue. Consequently a panic of fear prevented the people from openly professing that they were His followers. Before this tribunal Sidonio was summoned, and was asked how he received his sight. "Christ," he said, "put clay upon my eyes, and I washed and I see"; and they continued, "What sayest thou of Him that hath opened thy eyes?" and he said, "He is a prophet." This public profession of the man that was blind filled the Pharisees with rage, and in order to confute his evidence, they sent for his parents with a view to see if they could discover from them anything that would serve them to contradict him. The parents came; and listen to the vacillating and equivocating manner of the parents who trembled with fear that

if they acknowledged the great act of beneficence done by Christ to their son in giving him sight, they might compromise their position and offend the Synagogue. "All we know," they said, "is that this is our son, and that he was blind, but how he now seeth, we know not; ask himself, he is of age, let him speak for himself." The Jews called him again, and said to him, "Give glory to God, we know this man is a sinner," meaning Christ. The blind man became now outspoken. In fact he was determined to defend Jesus Christ, and would not listen to them calumniating him. "If he be a sinner, replied the blind man, I know not. One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." And persisting in their interrogations, they again asked him, what did He do to thee, how did He open your eyes? And the blind man became more courageous. "I told you before, he said, why do you want to hear it again? Will you also become His disciples?" This was the climax. The Jews reviled him, but before he left them he gave them one parting shot. The Jews addressing Sidonio said, "You be His disciple if you wish, but we are the disciples of Moses, but as to this man we know not from whence he is." Then came a reply from the blind beggar that penetrated the very soul of his revilers and stung them. "Why herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence He is. From the beginning of the world, it hath not been heard, that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, He could not do anything." When he uttered these

words, they took hold of him and threw him out. Christ had heard of the treatment that Sidonio received from the Pharisees and He sought him, and having found him, He said to him, "Dost thou believe in the Son of God? and he answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him? and Jesus said to him, thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee. And the blind man replied, I believe Lord, and falling down he adored Him. And Jesus continuing said, I am come into this world that they who see not, may see, and they who see may become blind."

In the action of the parents of the blind man is a picture which we can view every day in those timid souls who through human respect wish to stand well with their fellow men at the sacrifice of their faith; who lack the courage to stand up for Christ; who esteem gold more valuable than virtue; who make peace on dishonorable terms; who in the dim twilight of their belief scuttle the great ship upon which their own little bark is carried. We see human respect every day in the busy scenes of life. It consists in nothing more than a desire to stand well with, and to gain the approval of men as the great object of life to which all things must take a subordinate place. It is not wrong to seek the approval of men, for God Himself tells us not to hide our light, but let it shine before men, that they may see our good works. But when we look no further than the esteem of men to which everything else must give place, then we ramble away from our true destina-

tion. For nothing intoxicates us more than the breath of public esteem and the consciousness of influence. When conscience or duty conflict with human estimation, the right principle may give way and the wrong one prevail. Should this occur, then we become slaves of public opinion and human respect, and we are unable to rise higher than the plane on which moves the influence of the world.

We have the Scribes and Pharisees with us to-day in the proud men who wish to be classed as scientific and literary savants. There exists in the minds of this class a perpetual pressure urging them to disseminate their teachings, and, there is on the other hand, on the part of the people, a corresponding thirst to drink thereof. Men of letters of an infidel school are men of theory, and their hypothetical reasoning is seldom measured by the standard of practical experiment. Their pride lifts them higher than their fellow men, and this fictitious mental superiority forces them to arrogate to themselves a form of infallibility, and no herald of the Gospel, or no soldier in the battlefield, hungered with more avidity to secure conquests, as the proud literary and scientific man. The teachings of such men choke and dry up intellectual vegetation in the flying sands of materialism, and that which should appear verdant wears a languid, parched and shriveled look. Let us take a young man who is guided by certain principles, who believes in God and His divine attributes. He has a wish to study a profession to which physiological science is preparatory. While his studies

progress in this department his knowledge of religion or theology is stationary. In his early studies he was taught that life was a gift from the Creator, but now the Pharisee in the chair tells him that life and motion must be traced to another cause, that life is dependent on certain stimuli such as heat, light and electricity. The scientific knowledge of this young aspirant grows into maturity, but his religious knowledge is that of his boyhood. He concludes, as he progresses in his scientific studies, that he has discovered something that he did not know before. This new knowledge pushes out that which he learned when younger, evicts by degrees his earlier teachings, and as he advances he drinks deeper draughts from the pleasing spring; he finds out other causes of the effects he sees in life, and the conceit of this discovery hides from him the fact that these causes are themselves effects; he personifies abstractions and deifies nature. Here lies the great danger that confronts the youth of a nation. How many are there who with only the smattering of a little knowledge acquired at some school, whose theology is that of profane philosophers, whose doctrines are limited by the boundary of romance, whose erudition is the snapshot from an encyclopedia, yet boast of knowing things better than the colossal minds of an Augustine, a St. Thomas, a Newman, or a Newton; they look upon the Gospel narrative with as much levity as a page from mythology that tells something about Venus or Jupiter. They say the mysteries of religion are too abstruse and contradictory to reason,

its moral too severe; they condemn fast days, abstinence, discredit the religious profession, deride pious practices, and burlesque chastity and charity. They believe that no one can teach them, they are stone blind; they see not although they live and bask under the meridian splendor of the truth. They are inexcusably blind, and therefore blindness and sin form that punishment which Christ spoke of to the Pharisees, when He said, "But now you say, we see. Your sin remaineth."

If to gain a position a young man has not the courage to profess his religion, although from the springtime of his life he preserved undimmed the light of faith, but now entering society he finds his faith derided, and if he practices it he will be called an effeminate devotee, and that it is not manly to be a church-goer, and if the passport to obtain that position is a diploma that you have no religion, a man who sails under these colors is an arrant coward and unworthy of the name of man. If he be such a coward, and crouches through fear of being gibed at, look at him represented in the parents of the blind man. But if he be courageous enough to look with contempt on the sneers and banterings of the modern Scribes and Pharisees, he is vividly represented in the conduct of the blind man to whom our Lord gave sight.

If our faith be languid and sickly. If it pulsates with little life. If it be a faith held on by a slender chord, a faith oppressed and obscured by clouds of darkness emanating from a corrupt heart. If that

be the kind of faith that any of us should have, let us go to the school of our Divine Master and there learn the lesson that will soon correct us. There we can drink in those deep draughts of knowledge and wisdom that will extinguish our pride, and show us how to plumb the shallow depths of our nothingness. It is in this school the law-giver finds the sanction and stability of his institutions. It was in this the philosophers, poets and orators of the Roman and Grecian worlds found the basis of social order. It was in this school historians learned to trace the vicissitudes of nations to the hand of God. Bards found in faith and religion fountains for their liveliest charms. Poets like Dante and Milton received from faith inspirations to versify their sublime thoughts, and architects raised cathedrals, real poems in stone, where the glories of God are sung. It was at the shrine of faith that painters and sculptors like Michael Angelo, Raphael, Domenichino, Leonardo da Vinci, and Rubens, found that which directed their chisel and brush in the world's great masterpieces of art. What is it that makes the home a miniature of heaven but FAITH!

The entire history of the Catholic Church written with tears and blood record the effects of faith on the soul. It defied and triumphed over all the horrible ingenuities of human cruelty, the indescribable agonies of the rack, the cauldrons of boiling oil and pitch, the lambient flames from the burning fagots. It robed with the crimson robe of martyrdom noble tribunes like Quirinus, brave captains of the im-

perial guard like Sebastian, valiant generals like Placidus, chaste and tender virgins like St. Agnes who refused nuptials with a Roman Prince declaring that she had already a suitor in Jesus Christ. What but faith strengthened St. Prisca, a little girl of thirteen years who faced the most excruciating torments! It sustained the aged Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem. St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch in the hours of martyrdom, and the weakly frame of Blandina who was tortured so long that her cruel tormentors grew tired.

The loathsome dungeons of the Mamertine prison, the Roman arena, recall to our memory the bloody days of persecution under Nero and his successors, when for upwards of three hundred years they were a wine-press of martyrdom, where the aged, delicate women, feeble children embraced with unflinching courage the most painful and most terrible deaths. Down in the pitchy gloom of the catacombs the rude slab, the palm, the crown, the little phial of blood blushing with its crimson treasure, and the thrilling monograms reveal to us what sufferings the martyrs of old have undergone as they bent their heads under the lictor's ax in defense of their faith.

It is not necessary to travel back so far on the corridors of time, for modern history confronts us with heroism as valiant as that of old. During the Calvinistic movement in France we stand dazed at the awful wreck of souls suffering for the faith. Within forty years of carnage, vandalism and bloodshed no less than five thousand priests and members

of religious orders suffered martyrdom. In the days of the French Revolution faith bathed the streets of Paris to such an extent with the blood of the noblest lives that special sewers were constructed to carry away their blood. On one occasion three hundred innocent children, orphans of those already murdered, were cast into the river Loire, the mob crying out, "Down with the brats, they are the eggs of the reptile."

In the days of Henry the Eighth and Elizabeth, the rack seldom stood idle in the Tower of London. Faith brought down the ax on the neck of Thomas Moore and the saintly Bishop Fisher, and thousands of others who laid down their lives as a sacrifice to truth and Christian faith. And when that inhuman blood-thirsty persecutor, Oliver Cromwell, landed on Irish soil with his army of Ironsides, he sought to destroy catholicity, but he failed. The scaffold, the rack, confiscation of property had no effect to estrange the Irish people from their ancient faith. It was this virtue that crowned with martyrdom Dermot O'Hurley, archbishop of Cashel, Richard Creagh, archbishop of Armagh, and Patrick O'Healy, bishop of Mayo, and thousands of others whose blood crimsoned the green grass of Irish soil in defense of their altars.

Where is the observer that could pass along the road of life and not be rapt in admiration of the consecration of womanhood to relieve the poor and afflicted and whisper Christian love in the ears of human misery! There is sin in the world, there are

false steps in life, there is human distress surcharging the atmosphere in every age and in every clime, there is therefore a mission for charity. While the votaries of the world go on whirling in the whirl of giddy pleasure, we see ladies severing every tie that bound them to the world, who look on its fashion and beauty as so much butterfly colors; touch them and they crumble to dust. These ladies divest themselves of the world's shimmering brilliances and put on a coarse garb and the meekness of the Saviour of Bethlehem. Their character is the purest, their benevolence is the sweetest of woman. What is their mission? Some take up the wastrels from the evils of a misspent life, present to their lips the cup of kindness, lift off the heavy weight of despair that is crushing their souls, and point to them the emblem of mercy represented on the crucifix. Oh, what a change! What peace and consolation do their gentle whispers bring to the poor derelict; the turbulent soul is soothed and calmed. The aged and decrepit are despised by the world, they are so much human waste, fit only to be dumped on humanity's scrap heap. No one wants them, no one cares for them, let them die. The little sister of the poor takes them to her home, and tramps from door to door questing food and raiment to feed them and cover their shivering limbs out of her poverty basket. Others like angels of mercy seek the homeless and shelter them. The father and mother are in their cold grave, and the child is a waif on the waves of a cold and pitiless world; the sister of charity throws

her mantle of love around it and warms its little heart. She mingles with the flotsam and jetsam, the scum and the refuse along the highways of the world, and to this ragged fringe of humanity she brings comfort, consolation and salvation. See her in the battlefield spurning all danger amid shot and shell; under the dim cloud of battle binding up the wounds of a bleeding soldier, and in the hospital nursing back to life the shattered form of chivalry. All forms of disease, no matter how loathsome, or virulent, has the ministrations of these ministering angels. Should we not therefore worship the inspiration that animates such noble souls? I ask what is the motive that actuates these sweet messengers of love? Faith in Him who is the fountain of all love.

INFIDELITY

Between God and man there exists a certain relation. They are united by some bond. This is a truth we are constrained to admit when we come to exercise our moral and intellectual powers. This bond is of a very slender nature, its texture is very delicate with some, the constant friction of the world has worn it threadbare. With others the strain became too powerful and it snapped and left man an exile, and while wandering in the thickets of his wild ideas he traveled so far in devious paths that he became lost, and forgettting all about God and the relationship between them, he came to the conclusion that this Being called a Deity, and the cult or worship paid to Him called religion was an invention from an overheated imagination, some puerile myth, a superstitious obscurity, a creation of an effeminate mind. He becomes, in fact, an infidel.

From this relationship God has certain rights, and He will not give them up. There is a kind of contract between God and man, it is an irrevocable contract, and God's signature is there in His image and in His likeness. But man's signature is almost obliterated by his concupiscences. When man's reason becomes vitiated it has tremendous auxiliaries in the weakness of the will and the perversity of the heart.

The consequence is that a disorder is produced in the soul.

There is an old saying in these words, "Would that we could see ourselves as others see us." In other words if we could see ourselves as others see us we might check in no small way our defects and endeavor to rectify and strengthen our conduct; we might see a hope of straightening our deformed soul.

It does not require much instruction to know that when we love any one thing or another, we are anxious to know everything about it, and the more knowledge we acquire about it, the greater becomes the incentive to love it with a stronger love, and make it the object of our love and affection. But when we look into ourselves we find this to be the very contrary, for the more we love ourselves the less anxious are we to know ourselves. "Self-love has no zeal for self-knowledge." Now what is it that prevents us from seeing ourselves? The concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life. They draw us away from ourselves. These mental and corporal pleasures increase the difficulties of self-knowledge, and by their stainings blur the beautiful mirror of the soul, — the conscience of the soul — where we should see our features reflected back.

The world is a world of enchantment that either wakes up the drowsy, or makes us dream a dream of unequaled loveliness. There is no doubt but we feel some great magnet drawing us closer every day to the world. The secret lies in the magnificent

promises of pleasure, whether this pleasure be seated in pride, vain-glory, or wealth. Whether it be real or visionary, it creates that for which we hunger and thirst, and we, avowedly, feel a keener appetite for it than the bee for the honey, the stag when exhausted for the rushing brook, the blinded moth for the burning light. We quaff this cup of pleasure to its dregs, think of its appetizing effects, revel in its bloating qualities that we may thirst the more. This is the ordinary history of man to-day in no matter what station of life we seek him. The general rule that directs men's actions is self. Go through that great web and woof of life and examine at every crossing the busy acts of men, and you will find each one brimful of the desire to seek his own self-interest.

Take first the business man, he is so occupied with his commercial pursuits, his time is so absolutely absorbed in them that he will not suffer any intrusion on the part of conscience to disturb his daily routine of duty. His mind is so set upon commercial interests that he will not consent to anything that might draw him away from them, or reflect upon anything save that which bears upon that state. What is the trend of his dealings with his fellow men? Oftentimes it is filled with cares and hissing strife, replete with dishonesty and unjust trafficking, full of sullen sorrow, perpetual anxiety and worry; notwithstanding all this he aims at one thing, Self. Self is the idol he worships.

Take the political man who scruples not at the

foulest intrigues, who creeps through the most hidden and closest meshes of secret plots to gain his end, who bellows out to the public pledges already broken, who stoops to the lowest acts of servility in order to win the votes of the applauding public, and through them climb to power. What is his object in all this? Self. Self is the god he worships.

But there is another concupiscence that stimulates the inordinate love of self against the laws of God, and the more fuel that is added to this fire the quicker are the laws of God burned out, and it burns on until every vestige of Him becomes extinguished, "a kind of moral earthquake takes place and every motive outside self is swallowed up in the blind gulfs of sensualism." The victims of this upheaval of the passions cry out, "Take away the commandments of God, draw the pen across the decalogue and we will be Christians like you; permit us the free indulgence of our passions and we will attend church. Remove the austere teaching which you preach and give reward to pride and libertinism, to avarice and fraud, and we will worship at your altars. This is the gospel of the twentieth century. What consequences may we expect from such a gospel? First doubt, then no faith at all: rampant infidelity. Men of such professions chase away the remotest admission of religion, and become deaf to the voice of conscience.

Observe that youth who refuses to recognize the laws that are the buttresses of the human race, he turns to the philosophy of the world because its

decalogue permits and foments his depraved nature. Temperance and modesty are sneered at by him; he passes his life in a series of lascivious orgies. Look at him in his business avocations, is he one upon whom his employer can rely? Is he trustworthy? Is he honest? The strongest reasons convince us that he is as empty of good traits as good fruit, as the withering reed that grows in the swamp. A strict supervision is necessary or he will fatten his pockets with his master's dollars. His god, too, is self.

Observe that woman who worships the world as her religion, and the world's vanities as her household gods. She is ever seeking for that something that will feed the flame of her sinful disorders. Are her children obedient to her? No, for there is no obedience in infidelity. Is she pure? Why should she? Her religion is the religion of the flesh and not of the spirit; there is no virtue in infidelity. She abuses the beauty that God gave her, but it soon fades, and that she may prolong her apparent and fading beauty before the glare of the world's footlights she has need of cosmetics. There is no sacredness in her home.

Observe the avaricious man, a poor starving creature out of employment craves an alms to support his dying frame. Go away, I am an infidel, I have no faith, and infidelity does not teach charity, although the hands of that man are stiff and crooked from the very work that assisted in accumulating that rich man's wealth, yet he refuses to give a crumb to help him along on his weary way of hunger. Were I to

go on my strength would fail me before I could reach the end of that long list of crimes committed under the name of infidelity.

I am not overstating things. We are traveling at such speed on the road of worldly pursuits that our eyes can rest but very indistinctly on those objects nearest to the interests of our soul; we pass them as passengers on an express train pass the mile-pegs on the road, catching only a faint sight of them as we sweep by, while our eyes are fixed upon objects most remote. You see for yourselves the state of society to-day in this great century of progress. We are living in a world of the senses. Scan the morning papers and you will see its sheets stained with blood through lust. Frequent the law courts and your ears will be shocked with filthy divorces. Go to the bookstall and you will discover that the vast majority of those there are of a composition purposely written to please and tickle our lower passions, and the filthier the plot or composition is the greater the sale. The gospel of voluptuousness, of pride, and mammon takes the place of the gospel of cleanliness, of humility and charity. The moral of Epicurus and of Petronius surreptitiously ousted the moral of Jesus Christ, and a people once Christian have now descended to the depths of corruption, cynicism and the brutal manners of idolatry.

One of the most poisoned wells to produce the stream of corrupt living is immoral literature. If our literature is immoral there is sufficient poison in it to vitiate a whole nation. It is the tree of good

and evil. It bears not only fair and rich fruit, but also a fruit juicy with poison, and the library and bookstall become the repositories from which the public obtain supplies to inoculate society. They are the drug stores where the poisonous serum is obtained to inoculate society. "From this filthy pool flow those streams of immorality which the curious will read and the thirsty will drink though the cup and page be polluted." This was the means adopted to sow the seeds of cockle preparatory to the greatest upheaval in modern times, the French Revolution. The philosophy of that revolution was a strenuous effort on the part of its leaders to wipe out God from the minds of the nation. And the heirs of Voltaire completed their philosophical saturnalia with an invocation to the goddess of reason, and to-day freethinkers who laugh at the prophecies of old, deify some strumpet fortune-teller. With such leaders of thought, and who have charge of the seed-plots, of education, what must we expect to emanate from the youth of a country? Logically they conclude that morality is only a smack of the palate by which we judge of the sweetness and sourness of things. What must be the consequences among the people of a nation who from their schools have learned that force and energy take the place of God, and that the moral law has to depend on what society wishes to make it? We must expect a complete dislocation of every joint in the whole framework of the nation. We have a living argument to-day to substantiate every word I say. Consider what is going on at this very moment

in the city of Lisbon. Anarchy is supreme there and is exercising all its power, and what is the result? Not only are churches and convents sacked and burnt to the ground, the sacred vestments torn to shreds, the sacred vessels melted down, the objects of veneration defiled, the priests and nuns murdered and exiled; but the public buildings plundered, men of position and rectitude in secular life sought out and robbed and gibbeted. The revolution is a cloak under whose cover the dagger is concealed to revenge hatred and spite. Anarchy, licentiousness, vice in all its heinous forms are the masters, Christ is again bound and buffeted in a sorrowful Gethsemani, and the incarnate devil is singing hosannahs in the city of Lisbon, the modern Jerusalem. And all this done in the name of liberty. But it is a liberty that means chains, bondage, slavery. No wonder that people from all nations leave a fatherland where the flag of liberty is crumpled up by bigotry, by selfishness, monopolizing laws, and tyranny, and as if called to the colors, flock to a new fatherland where the flag of liberty flaps freely in the breeze, a flag that looks down with contempt from her atmosphere of ethereal stars and loftiness upon these countries that have never soared so high in that serene air of freedom. And we members of our great church, the children of liberty, should not alone pray on one day of the week, but in the daily august sacrifice that never will that day of darkness come when the inky cloak of Satan would hang on the broad shoulders of this noble country, a country that

is now in the vanguard of civilization, and reveres in man that sacred and hallowed gift of God, the gift of liberty.

What has infidelity ever done for a nation? Where are its schools of learning? Where are its hospitals for the sick? Where are its asylums for the poor? Where are its refuges for the outcast? We see no such evidences of love for its fellow man. We see no monuments why we should so honor it. For it is the destroyer of morality, social order and liberty. Whenever it can pilfer the fruits of another's honest work it would do so unblushingly. Infidelity has no virtue, it prates of love, but with lips white with hate; it talks and shouts of liberty, but it desecrates it; when its liberty had power, it robbed man of it. "Specter-like it moves down the ages with Christianity gibing and gibbering as monkeys in the equatorial regions bar and interrupt the advances of the civilized explorer." It enjoys the fruits of Christian civilization as the barnacle or parasite enjoys the vigorous health of a stronger organism. Infidelity is a deep-seated and corrosive malady that gangrenes society. When faith goes out skepticism comes in, and when skepticism and profligacy make their ominous march over a country, evil will abound and accumulate, hollow languor and vacuity will seize the minds of some, want and stagnation others.

THE UNBELIEF OF THE WORLD

The Israelite nation was the chosen nation of God. "I myself will govern it with my providence, and I will send my angels to bear it in their hands that it may not fall. I will be to it all prodigies, and it will witness to my omnipotence before this world." When it was homeless He drew it out of Egypt; when it suffered from hunger He fed it with bread from heaven; when it was thirsty He caused water to gush from the adamant rocks to quench its thirst. It hung its harps upon the willows of Babylon, and He ransomed it from its captivity. Israel was to prepare the world for the Messiah. We read His life in the prophecies before He was born. David said that He was the son of God and the son of man (Ps. 2. 7). The prophet Isaias said He would be born of a virgin (7. 14). The prophet Micheas said that He would be born in Bethlehem (5. 2). The prophet Aggæus gives us the time of His birth (2. 8). The prophet Isaias introduces to us His precursor, St. John the Baptist (40. 3). The prophet Zecharias told us that He would be betrayed by one of His disciples and sold for thirty pieces of silver (11. 12). The prophet Zacharias speaks of His triumphal entry to Jerusalem (9. 9). David describes how He is misunderstood, despised, perse-

cuted and slain by His people (Ps. 21). The prophet Isaias foretold that He would suffer all kinds of insults in His passion, that He would be crowned with thorns, nailed to a cross, and His hands and feet would be pierced with nails (1. 6). David prophesied His resurrection from the dead (Ps. 15. 10). And His coming to judge the world was foretold by the prophets Joel and Malachy (2. 2), (3. 3). The prophet Joel also foretold the coming of the Holy Ghost (2. 28). Thus was the idea of the Messiah revealed to the people of Israel. These prophecies were so clearly fulfilled in Jesus Christ that we are obliged to look on them as His true biography. He had so lived in the minds of the prophets and Hebrew people that these prophecies were the true portraiture of the Messiah.

Let us appeal to history and see what kind of reception the Messiah received from this chosen people of God. When Jupiter held the divine scepter of Pagan theology, and Cæsar the scepter of human things, each assisting the government of the other, there arose an empire so gigantic that the world in its history records no other up to that time so powerful, so august, so transcendently grand. Other empires rose and fell crushed under the heels of the Cæsars. All others had to bend beneath its yoke. The world lay crouching at its feet, and with hushed breath obeyed its despotism. At this time men were startled by the presence of angels sweeping through the heavens and in angelic notes singing hosannahs, proclaiming, "Glory to God and peace on earth to men of good

will." Men listened to this heavenly chant, and the first to understand it were shepherds who left their flocks and hurried to Bethlehem, and then to a stable to adore a little babe born of a virgin. This is the Infant, they said, was the "Desired of nations," watched for by the patriarchs and prophets of old, and of whose victories the sybils sung. Then kings in their royal robes interpreting the voice of a star in the heavens followed a few days later on the track of the shepherds, and not allowing either the poverty of this Infant's mother, or His palace-stable to cause a doubt of His sovereignty or priestly prerogatives, they knelt down and adored Him as the promised Messiah. Another few days elapsed; the mother and child entered the temple and an old sage taking the Infant in his arms, looked up to heaven with eyes bleared with tears and cried out, "O Lord, let me die now as I have seen Him who is destined to be the saviour of men." Twelve years later we get a glimpse of the wonder He excited among the learned doctors, disputing with them in the temple. As Heli bowed before the supernatural wisdom of little Samuel, so did the doctors of the law bow before the supernatural wisdom of the boy Christ. About thirty years passed and another voice was heard coming from an austere man living in the desert on locusts and wild honey, declaring that Christ is the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. This Christ sowed miracles along His path, healing every disease and infirmity. These miracles were incontestable facts of His divinity. He showed by them that He had a direct and unlimited

power over nature. All the elements obeyed Him. I command you to see, He said to the blind man, and the blind man saw. I command you to hear, He said to the deaf man, and the deaf man heard. I command you to speak, He said to the dumb, and the tongue of the dumb became relaxed, and he spoke. Oh, poor leper, be clean, He said, and the scales of leprosy fell from him. He looks into the heavens and stills the raging storm. He speaks to the turbulent waves of the sea tempestuously tossed by the winds and there is a dead calm. The devils of hell rushed back to their beds of fire at His very appearance. There was no doubt about it, He is their Master and they all obey Him. He is the King of the world. Crowds followed Him, and the multitude adored Him. All the elements obeyed Him with an unfaltering obedience as never seen before by men. The people of Israel were the principal factors in bringing to fulfillment the prophecies, and yet they failed to set these acts applicable to the Messiah. In spite of all this testimony they did not know Him when He came among them. They ignored His miracles, rejected His warnings, broke into blasphemies, fell into idolatry, beheaded His holy prophets, and steeped its life in seething discord.

Who will dare accuse me of sin? said Christ. It is not recorded that any one ever threw down such a challenge, no one ventured to pronounce such words since, and no man will ever be so bold as to repeat them in the future. While He was on earth He taught a doctrine as sinless as His sinless soul. It had no

blur nor blotch on it, nay, more, there was an aroma of sweetness about it so strong that the atmosphere of Judea and Galilee became redolent with it. There was a light from it like the soft and mellow light of a summer's morning dawn. When He spoke, His words were like arrows of love revealing divine truth that brought calm to troubled minds, and in spite of all this the people of Israel closed its eyes from the light, and turned its heart from His love, nay more, one of His associates betrayed Him, another denied Him, all abandoned Him, and the people finally crucified Him. Yes, they say, He said that He was King, He said that He was the son of God, and when arraigned before Pilate He substantiated the report. Yes, I am King, I am the King of truth, but my kingdom is not of this world. I am the Son of God. Away with Him. Let Him be crucified, cried out this corrupt and weak judge, and amid the mockeries and insults of a frenzied rabble Christ was crucified. There was a lull; there was a dead silence. It was the lull; it was the silence of Christ's sepulcher. But it was of short duration; it lasted only three short days. Jesus, the Nazarene, arose from His sepulcher, and what is almost incredible, even His beloved Apostles wavered in their belief in His resurrection when He appeared among them. Having instructed His apostles and founded the Church that was to perpetuate His mission, He ascended to His kingdom — to His Eternal Father from whom He came.

When we look back at the history of Israel in its conduct towards the Messiah we are amazed at the

blindness of the Scribes and Pharisees. It is astonishing to read of the vehement opposition of the Scribes and Pharisees in the face of His miracles. This obstinacy is vividly portrayed in the history of the man born blind and gaining his sight. They admitted the miracle, but sought every means to attribute it to anything but to Jesus Christ. Now if we examine the conduct of the world to-day with reference to its conduct towards this same Messiah and His Church we are placed in a very ugly position, for we see more than the Scribes and Pharisees ever saw, because we see not only what they saw, but we see the triumph of His doctrine, and therefore we are doubly blind. We see the halo of triumph that crowned the brow of Jesus when He arose from the dead, grow larger until it circled the whole world, and thereby supplying incentives to strengthen our faith and increase our merit, yet see how the world treats Him in His Church. The voice that came from the Cross sounded in every hall of the human conscience preaching peace, justice, and mercy. The mythology of Jupiter enthroned on Mount Olympus was substituted by the theology of the Crucified on Mount Calvary. It was a theology that seized man in both body and soul, teaching him what to believe, what to do, and how to pray. It is a theology that forms the indestructible foundation of human society, for Catholic dogma is the criterion of science, Catholic morality is the criterion of actions, and charity is the criterion of affections. Its stern and solemn voice is not content with a mere exhortation, but commands with an in-

flexible authority, and when it speaks, it puts beyond question all truths bearing on faith and morals. The constitution cannot exist without political authority, the family cannot exist without domestic authority. These are human, flexible, fallible; there is need of an authority which should be supernatural, inflexible, infallible. An authority above these and with such power that when it spoke it could not be contradicted. An authority not built on shifting sands, at the mercy of human fluctuations, but on a rock so firm that no matter how tempestuous the waves of the restless sea of the world be, they cannot shake it. This authority was necessary, for if truth was exposed to the vain disputes of man, it would be soon so blurred as to be beyond all recognition. There never was a time, when there was not on earth a visible and speaking authority to which it was a duty to submit. Before Jesus Christ we had the Synagogue; when the Synagogue was disappearing we had Jesus Christ; when Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, His Church remained to which the Holy Spirit came. It won't do to say that we have His Word in the Bible, because it can be, and is handled and explained at pleasure, and makes no reply to those when misunderstood. We must have an external means, an assured means of removing doubts. This is His infallible Church, and since its institution the world has been saved from chaos, and has been a luminous beacon light to erring mariners on the boiling sea of the world of doubt. This Church represents human nature without sin just as it came from the hands of the Creator, full of original justice

and sanctifying grace, and must not be subject to death. From this it follows that the Church alone has the right to affirm and deny, and that there is no right outside her to affirm what she denies, or to deny what she affirms. When society forgets this truth and flies to human intellects puffed with pride, for a decision between truth and error, it enters into a land of shadows, and is governed by a fictitious scepter. Her mission is that of her divine Founder to proclaim the truth, and anathematize error, to defend liberty when righteous and condemn it when wrongful, to defend it when authority becomes tyrannical, as well as when the subject strives to become entirely emancipated. If her voice defies authority, it does not do so at the sacrifice of the subject, for it blasts pride and domination in the opulent. If it condemns despotism it anathematizes rebellion and sanctifies obedience. And as long as time rolls and empires pass on, lost in the waves of time's great sea, the Church will continue to thunder this gospel.

When Jesus Christ was laying the foundations of His Church and molding her into form, He, like the great prophets of old who foretold His own life, wrote for His disciples the life of His Church and placed it before their eyes. He foretold how the demons of hell would combine with the demons of the earth to trample on it and attempt to crush it. Its blood was to flow for dogs to lap, and its flesh to be torn to pieces to feed the croaking ravens, but He told them not to be discouraged, He would be with her, and in the end would place on her immaculate brow a wreath

of triumphal laurels. She throws down a challenge like her divine Founder. "Who will accuse me of error?" But the world, like Pilate, hurries on in its wild career and does not wait to hear the truth from her lips. The halls of universities resound with eloquence in denouncing her; the oratory of sophists thrills students in search of truth, but when they are asked to listen to what she has to say about it they turn aside, and with pricked ears and rapt attention hail with applause whenever a poisoned arrow is shot at her. When they have to speak of her doctrinal tenets it is with irreverence, for they call her religious practices, superstition, and the learning of her teachers, monkish ignorance. Scientists with powerful instruments look into cells and atoms of matter to detect something to give her a death-blow, but still she lives while they and their doctrines die and mold away. From her bosom sprang those monsters who attempted to devour her. The beautiful and seamless tunic she wears was woven in the looms of the supernatural, and her own children instead of seeking warmth in its capacious folds raise their irreligious hands and rend it. They strike the hand that cradled the days of their childhood, and forsake the hearth that was ever industrious to protect their infant innocence; like prodigals and wastrels they wander elsewhere to seek gross pleasures and impure loves. All this was foretold and yet the world does not see it. All other institutions crumble in time, because they are the offspring of time, but the institution founded by Christ is not limited or hemmed in by time or space.

She knows not these boundaries, other institutions are human and must pass on as the garments of humanity wear out and decay; but the institution of Christ is super-human, is supernatural, its boundaries are not circumscribed by earthly limits, they extend into the kingdom of her Founder, which is not of this earth. The Catholic Church is not like other churches, or civilizing influences, or civilizing institutions, which occupy a spot in space and a moment in time, but is all time, is all space. Uncivilized tribes, cultured kingdoms, corrupt hearts, rebellious intellects bow before her. All this the world sees, and yet it not only does not believe in her, but crucifies her as Israel crucified her divine Founder.

PURGATORY

When King Darius appointed Daniel and two other princes over his kingdom to govern his people, Daniel excelled the other two princes in his manner of government. The king was so pleased with his administration that he thought it advisable to set him over the other princes, whereupon these plotted against him. They craftily suggested to the king that it was the general wish of all the magistrates, governors, and senators that an imperial decree be published to the following effect: "That whosoever shall ask any favor of any god, or man, for thirty days, but of thee, O King, shall be cast into the lion's den." And the king, complying with their request, set forth this decree. When Daniel heard of the edict he opened the windows of his house that were looking towards Jerusalem, and knelt down three times during the day to pray and supplicate God. Wherefore these cruel and cunning plotters carefully watched Daniel, and informed the king that Daniel violated the decree. When the king heard of Daniel's violation of the law he was much grieved and troubled, and wished to defend him because he loved Daniel, but the plotters against him addressed the king, saying, "Know thou, O King, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, that no decree which the king hath made may be al-

tered." Then the king commanded that Daniel be brought before him in order to pass sentence on him, and when the king was ordering that he should be cast into the lion's den he said to Daniel, "Thy God whom thou always servest will deliver thee." Daniel was cast into the den of lions and left all night with these fierce animals, and the king's seal was put on the entrance so that no one should dare attempt to rescue Daniel. The king was very much troubled and he retired to his palace in great grief. Next morning the king rose very early, and went with haste to the lion's den and cried out with an anxious and sorrowful voice: "Daniel, servant of the living God, hath thy God whom thou servest always, been able to deliver thee from the lions?" And Daniel, answering the king, said, "O King, live forever. My God has sent his angel, and has shut up the mouths of the lions, and they have not hurt me."

This Scriptural narrative which records a fact in ancient history, is a figure of God sending souls to Purgatory. "Go," He says to them, "there is another God who will release thee, and who will be thy liberator." This liberator is the prayer of the Church through us, which is like Moses constituted another great mediator in the gloomy Egypt of purgatory. Having received the power of applying the infinite merits of the Crucified, we can scatter them in abundance over that parching desert and alleviate their untold sufferings, and inspire them with the hope that the promised land is near, and the fetters of their bondage will be speedily broken.

The hope, therefore, of these souls is based on us; they cannot expect succor except from us. Their fate is in our hands. The sight of their pain cannot disarm the justice of God unless through our prayers. The source of their succor is not in heaven, but on earth. "Deus tuus liberabit te. Ecce constitui te Deum." What grandeur, what nobility lies in our ministry. We who are in need of protection are their protectors. We still in exile are powerful enough to lead them to their beloved fatherland. We can hasten the fulfillment of their happy destiny, while we are inert and passive with regard to our own. While still prisoners in the penitentiary of the body, we can batter down the wall that separates them from their God, and for whose presence they sigh. While still chained to the earth we can break the chains that impede their ascent to heaven. Like that omnipotent voice of God that will sound in every tomb and call up the dead to a new life, the voice of charity, of love speaking through our powerful assistance, echoing in that region of painful purgation will lead those suffering souls to an immortal life. Elevated above the angels, and constituted mediators between the justice and the mercy of God, we enjoy the prerogative of causing the divine mercy to be rained down upon these souls who are the victims of His divine Justice. "Deus tuus liberabit te. Ecce constitui te Deum."

Society is the cordial union of intelligent beings united to each other through obedience to the same ruling power. And as a people who are separated from each other by reason of distance, diversity of

language, customs, manners and religion, and at the same time subject to the same governing authority, form a political society; in a similar manner, although the distance may be immense, different may be the conditions between the souls of the three different states, viz., the souls of the elect in heaven, those voyaging on earth, and those in a state of expiation in purgatory: nevertheless there is among them a religious society: this granted, all three in their different states love the same God, and in different ways participate in the results of the same Saviour-Mediator: form one family, one church of which God is the head, Jesus Christ the Mediator, and the bond that unites us all together. This is the doctrine of the *communion of saints,* which is nought else but the natural and reasonable law of the society of intelligent beings united to each other by means of the same grace and love, and by which we are fellow-citizens of the saints, domestics of heaven, and sons and heirs of God. Hence the excellence and beauty of our faith: because where proud infidelity discovers nothing beyond the grave; and stupid heresy sees nothing in death but insensibility, and the complete interruption of every tie between those who die and those who live; the Catholic Church elevating our thoughts above the sensible, in the midst of the weeping tombstones of mourning she speaks to us the language of love; in the presence of the trophies of death she reminds us of eternal life to which we are all destined. Extending her clemency and tenderness to the needs of all she invokes the patronage of the elect in heaven on behalf of her chil-

dren who struggle on earth; and here she implores the assistance of her children on earth for those who suffer in purgatory. For this reason she now and then opens the grave of the deceased, and over the remains and bleached bones of those who have already traveled on the road to eternity, she keeps vigil as a mother watches over her sleeping children. She presents them to our corporal eyes that we may shed tears of pity, and recalls to our memory their bleeding souls that we may relieve them by our prayers and beseech the purifying effects of the blood of the Lamb to blot out those black marks that blotch and stain their souls, and thus being purified from every stain the preparation is completed for the enjoyment of Him for whose presence they yearned.

Since man commenced to die care for the sepulcher was an object of veneration and prayer, for the dead was part of his language. In all times, among all peoples, with all religions the voice of mankind was heard expressing belief that the dead can be relieved by the prayers of the living. In professing this tender truth we associate our belief with the belief of all ages. A few soldiers belonging to the army of Judas Machabeus had, contrary to the command of God, carried away from the temple of Jamma some objects consecrated to idols, and hid them under their coats during the course of a battle, in which they all tragically lost their lives. Their fault, which was looked upon as the cause of their death, was discovered when they were about to be buried. Judas Machabeus believing that there were grounds for supposing either

that they were not sufficiently acquainted with the law to understand the grievousness of their transgression, or that they had repented of it in the sight of God before breathing their last, ordered a collection to be made, and the silver to be forwarded to Jerusalem, that sacrifices might be offered for their sins. "He considered," says the Scripture, "that a great mercy is in store for those who die in piety. It is therefore a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins." (2 Machabeus.) Thus, among the Jews, it was believed a pious and salutary practice to offer sacrifices for the dead, that they might be freed from their sins.

From Judaism it passed to Christianity. The Church has professed the doctrine of purgatory from her very cradle. Her councils directed it, her monuments memorialize it, her liturgies express it, all her writings demonstrate it. The Fathers of the Church who are looked upon as the faithful depositaries of doctrine, the truthful voice of tradition, whose learning and sanctity are unquestionable, have always professed it, taught it, and commended the doctrine of purgatory. It would be a long task to relate here all the testimonies of the Fathers and ecclesiastical writers, which establish the perpetuity of this touching observance. We shall confine ourselves to a few. "Assemble," says the Apostolic Constitutions, "in cemeteries, read the sacred books there, chant the psalms in honor of the martyrs, and all saints, and for your brethren who have died in the Lord, and next offer the Eucharist." Tertullian, who lived so near

the time of the Apostles, speaks frequently of prayer for the dead, and says this usage was founded on tradition. St. Cyprian, alluding to prayers for the dead, writes these remarkable words: "The Bishops, our predecessors, had already decreed that none of our brethren should in his will name an ecclesiastic as tutor or guardian, and if he did so that no one should pray for him, or celebrate the sacrifice for the repose of his soul." This decision prior to the time of St. Cyprian supposes the practice of praying for the dead to be an established one, and thereby points out to us the apostolicity of its origin. St. John Chrysostom says, "It was not without reason that the Apostles ordained that in the celebration of the terrible mysteries a commemoration should be made of the deceased, for they well knew how useful and profitable it would be for the dead."

The liturgies of many sects separated from the Church, though not written till the fourth century, date their origin nevertheless from the time of the Apostles. The liturgy of the Nestorian of Malabar expresses itself thus with regard to the doctrine of purgatory: "Let us remember our forefathers, our brethren, the faithful who have departed out of this world in the orthodox faith; let us beseech the Lord to make them worthy of a share in eternal felicity with the just who are conformed to the divine will." The same sentiments and supplications are found in the liturgies of the Arminians, of the Greeks, of the Jacobite Copts, of the Abyssinians, and other sects separated from the Church. Now this unanimous con-

currence of all Christians, this perfect uniformity of all liturgies, necessarily supposes a common origin, recognized alike by Catholics and dissenters. It is therefore to the teaching of the Apostles and their divine Master that we must refer the universal practice of praying for the dead, and the belief of the utility thereof, as well as in the existence of purgatory, which is inseparable from the belief. They are our brethren according to the flesh, our parents, our brothers, our sisters, our friends, our spiritual fathers, these are the persons who from the midst of flames raise their suppliant hands to us and cry out: "Have pity on us, have pity on us, at least you who were our relatives and friends."

Our Lord finding this custom established never said a word against it to the Jews. If he wished to disapprove of it, how is it that He did not warn His disciples against such a tradition? Still more, He knew that all Christians would religiously receive this tradition during the ages that were to follow: that when renewing every day the sacrifice of His Body and Blood, they would earnestly ask the application of His merits to the suffering souls of their deceased brethren and yet He took no measures to prevent them. Christ Himself recommended this practice to His disciples, and with His infallible word confirmed their belief in purgatory. One day He said to them, "If any one blasphemes against the Son of Man, he may obtain pardon for his offense; but if he blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, his sin shall not be forgiven him, either in this world or in the world to come"

(Matth. 12). Therefore, there are sins which are forgiven in the world to come; otherwise the Saviour's expression would be meaningless. Now, as sin cannot be forgiven in the world to come, as regards its guilt and eternal punishment, it can therefore be forgiven as regards its temporal punishment. But this forgiveness does not take place in heaven, into which nothing defiled can enter, nor in hell, out of which there is no redemption. There is, therefore, a middle place between heaven and hell. This place we call purgatory.

"Be at agreement with thy adversary betimes, whilst thou art in the way with him: lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen I say to you, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou repay the last farthing" (Matth. 5).

With short sentences and simplicity of language the Scriptures reveal to us profound mysteries. This admirable style of Holy Writ pithily but expressedly teaches us the important lessons of our religion. Such is the evangelical passage which I have now cited.

This severe adversary to whom Christ introduces us, if He be God, and His law which is adverse to our carnal desires, to our profane interests, it is expedient that we should regulate our life, settle our accounts while we are still voyagers in this world.

This Judge, to whom the adversary consigns us for judgment, is Jesus Christ, to whom, as He Himself declares, God the Father has given power to judge all.

This debt which we have to pay even to the last

farthing, are the punishments, the satisfaction, that we owe God for our shortcomings, for our sins, a debt which unless we settle in this life by penance we must inexorably satisfy to the last cent in another place.

Finally this prison in which we will be imprisoned according to the sentence of Jesus Christ, and from which we will in fine be liberated when the debt is paid, is certainly not the prison of hell, since from hell there is no redemption, there is no possibility there for satisfaction, no price can purchase our release. Therefore it is clear that it must be a temporary prison. Purgatory.

How is it possible that Jesus Christ as Judge can be so inexorable, so deaf to all forms of entreaty, who is the God of mercy, of clemency and goodness? How is it possible that He would condemn, I don't say the souls of sinners, but the souls of the just, souls that are His friends, His children, until they pay the last farthing of the debts contracted with divine justice by their imperfections and their sins? Cannot He by His infinite mercy so arrange matters, that souls leaving this world in the state of grace should suffer no longer any torment? And from the infinite merits of God's superabundant satisfaction cannot He withdraw from them the obligation of every pain as He has cancelled every fault?

These are the sophisms of heresy studied by it to justify the diabolical pride with which it dares to deny the doctrine of purgatory, and oppose an ephemeral dream to the constant and universal belief of the human race: not only have Christians at all times and in

all places, but all forms of religions, all peoples have believed that the souls of our deceased friends can be alleviated in their sufferings by the prayers of the living. We must not therefore allow ourselves to be deceived by those sophisms. Yes, the mercy of God is infinite, so also are His sanctity and purity infinite, and of such a nature that He could not permit to His divine presence a creature stained with the slightest taint or shadow of sin. He could not, nor could He wish to place on the Holy Mount, or allow to enter the august tabernacle of heaven souls unless purified from every stain and adorned with the most perfect justice. God is good and His goodness is innate in Him, and He is only severe where the conduct of the creature calls for severity. His severity is but the accidental justice that is called forth to regulate the evil of which His creature is the only cause.

These venial faults, the relics and shadows of sins that hang about the soul are not sins; these imperfections into which we may fall every hour of the day are not criminal; that leavening of the concupiscence which stained the soul from its long alliance with the body, although it does not impede the friendship and grace of God, impedes, however, the vision and enjoyment of God. And until the soul becomes like a spotless mirror, cleared of the stainings resulting from the vaporings of the world, it can't reflect the perfections of God, or participate in His love. The martyrs, the saints, the penitent, those extraordinary and heroic souls, by the generosity of their sacrifices, by the frequent use of the sacraments, by the austerity of their

penances, by the sublime purity of their intentions, and immaculate lives, by the continual exercise of prayer, and the presence and love of God arrive at that stage of internal purification and perfection, that they destroy concupiscence in its most hidden recesses, so as to spiritualize their bodies and deify their hearts, and consequently issuing from their bodies they fly to receive the reward of their spiritual labors, and live in the beatific vision of God. But those who have not practiced these expiations, and who are accordingly not sufficiently purified during life, it is necessary that they be purified after death, and it is the general opinion that the purification is by fire. The souls, therefore, after death and in the grace of God, but stained and imperfect, escape the punishment of hell because they are just, but do not escape Purgatory because they are not clean: and they must remain there until the last trace of carnal corruption is effaced, and become worthy of the company of God. This doctrine is beautifully expressed by the prophet Isaias when he says, " God will sanctify His elect in a burning flame, that destroys the woody pith of imperfections, as grass is destroyed by fire." And the prophet Malachias, " For He is like a refining fire and like the fullers herb, and He shall sit refining and cleansing the silver, and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and shall refine them as gold."

Again, if the mercy of God as judge is infinite, His justice is also infinite, and, accordingly, when God pardons, He pardons as God. As God infinitely merciful He saves the sinner; but as God infinitely just He can-

not allow the most venial sin to go unpunished. God has to will that man may expiate his guilt, may satisfy for his sin. "Donec reddat." To conceive the mercy of God to be of such a nature that while pardoning sin it would also dispense man from any act of penance or satisfaction, and would not leave to any soul, even the most loathing, any debt to pay, any punishment to fear, such a mercy would be a mercy capable of destroying among men every idea of justice, every fear of the judgments of God, because it would cost so little to satisfy for them: it would be a mercy capable of removing all horror and dread of sin, because it would be so easy to make reparation: it would be a mercy capable of destroying the essentials of Christian morality, which consists in the hatred and remoteness of venial sin, because venial sins would count as nothing. Therefore, as Holy Writ and the tradition of the Church teach, as reason substantiates and the conduct of the greatest penitents persuade us, that after having obtained pardon still the soul should weep, do penance and pay a penalty. God in pardoning does not exempt all debts from a contrite and penitent heart. Such is the evidence produced from the conduct of David, Peter and Magdalen.

How few are they who accept and profit by the advice of Jesus Christ and be in agreement with their adversary whilst they are on the way with him; in other words, how few of sinners converted who still in the enjoyment of life purify their bodies by penance in proportion to the manner they caressed and pampered it; who satisfy their adversary, that is the di-

vine justice, in proportion to the offenses committed against it. The vast majority of penitents leave this world without having closed their accounts with their divine adversary. They bring with them sins mourned over but not expiated. Their sorrow was sincere, but their penance was not rigid; they are not enemies of God because they are penitent for their misdeeds, but they are debtors of God because they have not sufficiently expiated: their souls, therefore, shall be confined to the minister of the justice of God for imprisonment in the prison of Purgatory, from which, according to the sworn testimony of God, they shall not be freed until the last farthing due to divine justice be paid.

At the same time we must not conclude that this divine Judge in the rigorous exercise of His justice has forgotten His mercy. These souls, although in this state of expiation, are in the grace of God, although in exile are still His, although in prison yet they are espoused to Him, and have a right to His kingdom; and while they are undergoing purification He loves them; while He withdraws from them yet He wishes to show them His divine presence; while He treats them with great rigor He wishes to prove to them His tenderness. What has He done in His wisdom to reconcile sentiments so opposing? He is inexorable because the debt has to be paid, but He is indulgent with regard to how it should be paid. If the unhappy debtor can't pay himself, He allows others to pay for him. In other words, He has established the economy of suffrage or assistance, by means of

which the church militant can succor the church purgative. We can come to the aid of those noble prisoners and shorten their dreary days of captivity by our prayers and indulgences.

When one is imprisoned for debt, he has no patrimony, no funds, no subsidy from which he can draw to settle his accounts with his creditors, and therefore has no hope of being released from imprisonment unless through some generous friend who may volunteer to pay his debts. In like manner the souls in purgatory are deprived of every means to obtain grace, to obtain the means to settle with their adversary — God. These means, these subsidies are to be found only on earth; they have no hope of seeing their sufferings alleviated, their chains snapped asunder, unless through our charity, through our eager wish to offer to God our prayers, our sacrifices, to appease and satisfy the justice of God, and thus do for them what they are not able to do for themselves.

Could we draw the veil aside and look into that kingdom of prison, what a sight would startle us; we would recognize the suppliant hands stretched out of loving parents and affectionate children, we would hear the sweet voice of those whom we once loved repeating the words of Job, "Have pity upon me, at least you, my friends, for the hand of the Lord hath touched me." You, my friends, instead of extending to me the hand of assistance to lift me from this bed of pain and suffering, an obligation that God has imposed on you, you seem to unite with His justice to increase my torture. I was good to you on earth, I cradled

your sufferings, I spent for you the sweat of my brow, I labored and fatigued to support you when you were unable to do so yourself, and when dying I left you my possessions which now give you a pleasant and comfortable life. And now since I cannot benefit you any further, are you so cruel as to give not even a thought for me, you pass by me unheeded, you abandon me in my excruciating pain, and make no effort to placate my Master to whom I owe a great debt.

How ungrateful, what ingratitude! For games, for gambling, for transient and earthly pleasures you have time and money. For your fashionable resorts and licentious meetings, for bacchanalian reveries you have days and nights to squander and run riot amid the madrigals of passion, but for the alleviation of my poor suffering soul you have not a farthing to give in alms, not one hour to give in prayer, and you call yourself a Christian. You persecute me like my God, but with this difference, God is just, but you are ungrateful. What a fearful and alas, too, truthful indictment.

This insensibility on our part for the souls in Purgatory is as injurious to God as it is fatal to them. Because, as God in order to bind men in civil society together has made some rich, and ordered them to assist the poor, so in like manner in order to bind the souls of the faithful together into a religious society, has made some rich with the treasures of His graces, and from this treasury He has ordered us to pay the debts contracted by the souls in Purgatory. And as the rich when insensible to the plaints of the poor in-

sult the providence of God as Creator, so does the thoughtless Christian when he neglects the suffering souls in Purgatory, insult the loving providence of God, the Redeemer.

The damned in hell, while they yearn after God by the instinct of nature, hate Him through the malice of their will; while they seek Him, they fly from Him; while they long for Him they abhor Him; while they would wish to bless Him they blaspheme Him. But how different with the souls in Purgatory. They are drawn towards God not alone by the instinct of their nature, because they are the creatures of God, but by the force of divine charity, by sanctifying grace, which makes them the spouse of God. So that when they love they love only Him; they gravitate only towards Him as the great center of attraction, and yet can't get possession of Him. They are continually exclaiming, God of my heart, how comes it that I know you but I can't see you, I seek you but I can't find you? Infinite Good, how long shall I be separated from you? Infinite Beauty, when will it be that I can woo thee? Infinite Sweetness, when can I taste thee? Tender Father, when may I meet thee? Beloved Spouse, when can I embrace thee? Oh, miserable that I am here in this tormenting prison! I await thee, but thou art not coming. I call thee, but you do not respond. You are everywhere, but I can't find you anywhere. Everything speaks to me of thee. Everything leads me to thee, and I am separated from thee; without thee I have to be content with grief and tears.

"PEACE BE TO YOU"

— JOHN 20, 19.

Very early in the morning, as the sun was just rising, Mary Magdalen, Mary, the mother of James, accompanied with other pious women, proceeded to the blossoming garden where the sepulcher was, in which the body of Jesus was laid, in order to anoint it with ointments and sweet perfumes in accordance with the Oriental custom. Their eyes were reddened from weeping, their tears were not yet dried, quiet sighs broke that stillness which reigns with such solemnity after death. Arrived at the sepulcher, looking in they saw an angel who addressed them in the following words: "Be not affrighted, ye seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified, he is not here, he is risen." This is the expressive epigraph which the angel, in the height of his joy, sings over the tomb of the Son of God, verifying the words of the prophet Isaias: "And His sepulcher shall be glorious." How unlike the tombs of earthly kings where their power and glory ends; here the power and sovereignty of the king of heaven begins. One of the most convincing proofs of the divinity of Jesus Christ is the fact that, to no other born of woman but to Christ can the prophecies, even in the minutest details, be ascribed. The mystery of this day of joy awakens the hearts of true Christians, and recalls the prophecies of old,

and the glory with which they are fulfilled. In these prophecies the life of Christ was written before He was born. All the mysteries surrounding His life were not only predicted in the words of the prophets but prefigured by the actions of the patriarchs. Moses was the figure of His birth; Abel the figure of His innocence; Noah of His ministry; Melchisdech of His priesthood; Jacob of His patriarchate; Isaac of His sacrifice; Job of His sufferings; David of His persecutions; Solomon of His royalty; and to Joan was reserved the duty of sculpturing for us His glorious Resurrection, as our Lord explained by applying to himself this figure when He says, according to St. Matthew, "And a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet." Men being mortal feed death, but the author of life suffocates death. The sepulcher of men is the terrible executioner of that sentence which condemns man to dust, but the sepulcher of the Crucified preserves His body from corruption and restores it to a new life; it is a new kind of womb from which He is reborn. Mary conceived the Immaculate Word, and brought it forth Incarnate, subject, however, to death, but the sepulcher received Him dead and returned Him immortal. At the same time it must be remembered that Christ arose from the dead, not through the agency of any power but that of Himself. The Resurrection of Christ was unseen by mortal eyes. As the God-man came forth at midnight from the virginal womb of His mother without violating her virginity, so does He leave the seals of the sepulcher unbroken. The angel, continuing his

news of the risen Christ, told the women to go and tell his disciples, and particularly Peter, that He goeth before them into Galilee, and there they would see Him, as He told them. While on the way to Galilee Jesus met them, and said, "All hail." Our Lord, therefore, unhinged the gates of death and bore them away in triumph. "The bright and beautiful day of a blissful eternity has arisen for the God-man, and it will never wane or set." The joyous Alleluia is now the watchword.

Thus the Crucified fulfilled all the prophecies, kept all His promises, authenticated His doctrine, confirmed His mission, and showed to the world that He was God. That body that was a few hours ago subject to the insults of a howling mob, a frenzied rabble, is now endowed with gifts no longer earthly. He was once matter as man, but now He is spiritual as God. He was once mortal as man, but now He is immortal as God. He was once subject to pain and suffering, but now He is exempt from pain. What a brilliant reverse of His earthly life. What a transformation has taken place. He passes from ignomy to glory, from suffering to joy, from death to life. His crown of thorns becomes a crown of glory; the mock scepter becomes a staff with which He will shatter thrones and kingdoms; the jeering of the soldiers and coarse mob will give way to the adoration of kings and nations.

Circumstances surround the great mystery of the Resurrection similar to those that surrounded the mysteries of the Annunciation and birth of Christ. His

birth was announced by an angel to simple shepherds while herding their flocks. In a similar manner now did angels make known to a few simple women of Jerusalem the first news that Christ had arisen. The Apostles will see the risen Lord and live with Him, more or less, for forty days, so as to be the unquestionable witnesses of His Resurrection, and receive from Him the final instructions for the perpetuation of His work with regard to the salvation of mankind, but poor simple women were the first evangelists to announce the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. God, by this selection, shows us how He prefers ungarnished simplicity to the arrogance of intellectual loftiness. It is not he who, at the school of Jesus Christ, studies most, profits most, but he who prays most; not he who reasons, but he who believes; not he who discusses, but he who loves; the humble, devoted, loving soul soon finds Him, meets Him, and enjoys the practical knowledge of His mysteries; it loves them by believing them, and believes them by loving them. With what sweetness of language the angel addresses these pious women, "Do not be affrighted." You have no reason to be afraid, you were always within sight of the Crucified; He was always the object of your love; there was no law you loved more than His; you sought no grace but His; you were jealous of no love but His; you aspired to His presence above all others; while you seek him outside yourselves he resides in your hearts. Why should you be affrighted; you wept with Him when He wept; you often stretched out your hands to cradle His sufferings; full of sorrow and

deep grief you followed the "Man of sorrows" to Calvary, and when there while hanging on the Cross if you could not assist Him materially He had your love and sympathy in His agony. Go now into Galilee and there you will see Him, and join the grand chorus of rejoicing because He that was dead is risen.

Material nature joins intelligent nature in the great chorus of jubilation to the risen Saviour. The sun that hid its face by shrouding light with the covering of night in order that it might not see the tortures of the Crucified on the Cross, now dispells that darkness before the clock of nature has so arranged by its laws, and restores to nature the light of which it was defrauded during the hidden presence of the Saviour; night then chased light, but now light chases night. This beautiful luminary that shows more expressedly than the other material objects of creation, the magnificence, and greatness of God's power, anticipates the aurora in order to illumine with its brilliancy the day of Christ's Resurrection. As it eclipsed its light at noonday splendor in order not to see Christ's ignominious death, it appears to rise with Him again today to a new life. This rush of exultation on the part of the sun is communicated to all other created things. The air became redolent with an unusual sweetness. The earth, blossoming with varied tinted flowers, rivaled the rich garments of Solomon. The irrational animals leaped with joy. All nature seemed to rise to a new life with the risen Saviour. Both heaven and earth joined their voices in one grand universal chorus of joyous praise to their great Regenerator.

But there is a dark side to this picture which acts like a background to make by contrast the bright side more brilliant and beautiful. This darkness is produced by the profound consternation, the depression, the fear, and confusion of Christ's enemies. That very instant in which the glorified body of the Saviour pierced through the sepulcher without opening it, a terrific earthquake shook the earth. And although the earth vibrated with joy on the day of Christ's Resurrection like the strings of a musical instrument under the touch of a great artist, nevertheless, this tremor of the earth struck terror in the trembling hearts of those who guarded the sepulcher, and while the tremulous earth caused them to totter on their feet, the angel by dazing them with his heavenly brightness increased their horror. The angel hurled to one side the stone that closed the door of the tomb, and seemed to say, "Death, where is thy triumph now?" We fail to realize the feelings of the panic-stricken guards at this series of phenomena. With pallid faces and trembling limbs they hurried to announce to the chief priests and Pharisees what they witnessed. All Jerusalem was astir, was in commotion; a low murmur traveled from one to another in the words, "He is risen." The good were overcome with boundless joy, the wicked trembled. What a surprise for the ribald Jews when to these rumors was added the authentic evidence. How were they to suppress the news, what means were they to concoct to contradict the truth of the Resurrection? Deliberations were entered into at once. The cunning minds of Christ's enemies sug-

gested that the guards should be bribed with plenty of money to hold their tongues, and only say that his disciples came during the night and stole the body. But the lie was too bare-faced, the imposture too manifest. What wicked malice, what deep perversity, what hellish hardness of hearts so obstinately rebellious to the truth of God! The Resurrection of our Lord is an undeniable fact, and while adopting their vile means of suggesting secrecy these very enemies of Christ confess its truth.

But who is it that has need to tremble? Yes, the Scribes and Pharisees, and Sadducees have need to tremble. Pilate and the cruel executioners have need to tremble. The infidel, the unbeliever, the proud philosopher who looks upon the whole history of man's redemption as the offspring of a warped mind, these have need to tremble. The heretic, too, has need to tremble, because as the multiplication of sects before the coming of the Messiah distorted the true character of the Messiah, although all expected Him to be a deliverer, few believed Him to be divine. So is it to-day with regard to Christ and His Church, the rise and multiplication of sects are distorting the true idea of Christianity, and not a few deny its divine origin.

Let us rise, too, at early dawn, when the sun appears on the horizon, that is, let us throw one side the dark robes of vice that we had on during the dark night of sin, let us take with us the sweet perfumes of our virtuous deeds, the incense of our prayer, and seek to honor the God of truth. The grace which is scattered over the world to-day, lightens the yoke of

faith for the mind, and sweetly lifts the weight off the heart. Humble love believes all; thirsting love hopes all; efficacious love completes all. And thus fortified we are certain of meeting the risen Jesus in the true Galilee. Yes, I repeat with the angel, if you seek Christ crucified, you will find Him in the true Galilee, if you share in His pain and suffering, you will see Him in all His magnificence, in all His glory, in all His light and beauty, and be eternally happy with Him in heaven. When Christ arose from the dead some of the disciples were slow to believe in His Resurrection, notwithstanding that He told them that He would rise again. It took persuasive language to convince them. We must not, therefore, wonder at the Scribes and Pharisees not alone in not believing, but endeavoring to crush the belief that filled the souls of some. Now, if the faith of the people then was so cold and so hesitative, especially when the Saviour Himself was there on the spot to lighten up the darkness of their unbelief, we must not wonder in this age of distraction that men are so slow to believe, and when they do believe, how easy it is for them to lose their faith or suffer it to become icy cold.

The mysteries of God the Redeemer are bound to each other, and harmonize with each other in a wonderful manner. The peace which His angels announced to man at His birth, the peace which He promised to leave us on that ever memorable night before He suffered death, this peace forms the first salute He gives His Apostles after His resurrection. "He stood in the midst of them and said, Pax vobis." But

He does not give them peace of heart until He first gives them peace of mind. He leaves their minds in peace through the virtue of faith before anointing their hearts with the unction of love.

The death of Christ on Golgotha, like a whirlwind that convulses nature in its track, perturbed the souls of the disciples. They were unable to reconcile so many wondrous miracles worked by Christ with the ignominy which embittered His Passion. They failed to harmonize so many brilliant manifestations of His power with the catastrophe of His death, so many proofs of His divinity with such misery in His humanity. The minds of His disciples were tossed to and fro like a rudderless boat on the billows of a tempest-tossed sea, now on the crest of a surging wave, now engulfed in its death-threatening trough. At one time they were raised aloft to heaven, then they were suddenly dashed to earth. Buffeted by contrary emotions they were unable to reach the port of a peaceful mind or a calmness of heart. In spite of the various revelations and assurances vouchsafed to the Apostolic college of His Resurrection, still the mystery of the cross disquieted them. While the disciples were in this boiling sea of mental strain, their loving Master, the Scrutator of hearts, seeks them, and with the same power by which He on a former occasion scattered the turbulent winds and tranquilized the angry sea, He now restores calm to the troubled minds of the Apostles. Suddenly appearing in their midst He said, "Pax vobis." At his death irrational nature was unhinged, but His Resurrection restored

light to the eclipsed sun, and steadiness to the trembling earth. While all these things in the material world have resumed their normal state, the minds of the Apostles were still in a state of unrest. "Why are you troubled?" inquired Our Lord. "Why should you be still battered between belief and unbelief?" I come, He said, to give you peace. You must not stand out an exception to all nature. "Pax vobis," "Peace be to you." Even when the risen Saviour appeared among them, passing through the closed doors, they believed it to have been an apparition, as a spiritual substance is not arrested by material objects. They looked upon Jesus, when He appeared to them, as a natural phenomenon of the human soul, and not a prodigy of His divine power. Hence they shrunk from Him in terror and consternation. Christ read their hearts and minds and immediately addressed them. "Fear not. It is I. Why do such thoughts arise in your mind?" Commentators attribute these thoughts to three different reasons. They were still afraid of the Jews. They were still doubtful about His Resurrection, and about their position in the Apostolic college. They stood forlorn looking like a forsaken flock in helpless bewilderment seeking its shepherd.

Their attitude is a true picture of the human mind when widowed from divine light, always in disorder, agitated, and in continual warfare with itself, because the human mind is so formed by Infinite Truth, that the Truth of God alone can content it; and the human heart is so formed by the Infinite Good, that

the love of God alone can make it happy. The Truth of God which is enjoyed in heaven through the Beatific Vision, is not communicated to the mind on earth except through the revelation of Faith, just as the love of God is diffused in the heart through grace. And as the heart has no peace unless it possesses the grace of God, in like manner the mind has no peace if deprived of faith in God. And as the heart has no peace when it resists or despises the will of God, or His law, thus the mind has no peace when it resists and despises the knowledge of God which is the teaching of His faith. As all created objects cannot appease the heart made for the uncreated Good, thus all knowledge purely human cannot content the mind which is made for the Uncreated Truth. As the heart, therefore, that is not in the possession of divine grace, is always restless, hungry, even when it is in the enjoyment of earthly riches, honors and pleasures, thus the mind, that has not faith, although it may be rich with human knowledge, is always restless, uncertain and unhappy. Both the unbeliever and heretic are precisely in this sad condition, although the heretic may retain some of the truths of the revealed religion, and the unbeliever may retain some of the doctrines of what they call natural religion. Because these very Christian truths which the heretic holds on to, are merely opinions apparently more or less probable to his way of thinking and the fruit and conquest of his reason, they are, in fact, opinions purely human; and just in a similar manner does the unbeliever retain some natural truths as the fruit of his reasoning

powers and judgment. The heretic, therefore, does not admit Christian truths, nor does the unbeliever admit natural truths except when they appear admissible to both one and the other, because the heretic submits Christian revelation to private judgment, and the unbeliever submits all the truths, traditional and common to humanity, to his judgment also. The creed, therefore, of both one and the other is reducible to this one principle, *I believe in myself*. In this creed, which is the symbol of their faith, there is not even a vestige of human faith, much less divine. Because it is no longer God who, by means of His lawful ministers, speaks to His creature, and feeds and nourishes his intelligence with the bread of His divine Word, of His divine Truth; but it is the creature that forms from himself anything and everything that he believes about God, and who, to a certain extent, makes God subservient to himself. The man, therefore, who in a matter of faith, has for his guide his own opinion, is likened to the man who in a matter of morality has for his guide his instincts and passions, and as the heart is miserable and unhappy that favors itself in all things, so in like manner is the mind miserable of him who believes solely in itself.

But let us revisit the Cenacle. The loving Jesus is full to overflowing with love for His disciples. He preserved the scars formed in His body by the wounds of His crucifixion in order that He might heal the wounds in the hearts of His disciples — the wounds of incredulity. It is worthy of our atten-

tion to notice with what anxious solicitude, with what industrious love He accomplished this healing. In His interview with the Apostles He said to them, "Why are you troubled?" I am your Jesus. I am your Father. I am your Master. Approach Me, see the wounds in My hands and feet, the opening in My side, that were caused by the nails and lance when on the cross. Do not trust your eyes, stretch forth your hands, feel me, touch me, and be convinced that I am a human body made up of flesh and bones, that I am no phantom, and to convince them of the reality of His body He ate with them. Then a second time did He say, "Peace be to you." After He repeated these words He said to them, "As the Father has sent me I also send you," then He breathed on them in most expressive words which gave them the power of forgiving sins. "Receive you the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." While Our Lord was exercising this magisterial office in giving this solemn injunction to the Apostles, both light and grace were invisibly working in their minds and hearts. While they were listening to these important commissions they believed, tasted, and loved them. These very Apostles who a few moments ago had our Lord before their eyes without seeing Him, who heard Him speak without recognizing Him, now see, believe and acknowledge Him to be really risen from the dead. See, therefore, how this holy faith produces its peculiar effect; it recomposes their dis-

turbed minds, dissipates all doubt, removes all fear, calms and illumines them; this peace of mind, the fruit of faith descending into their hearts tranquilizes its turbulent affections, and shows its brilliancy in their eyes and countenance, makes itself manifest in their words and actions, for they went back to Jerusalem with joy.

The doctrine of the Catholic Church is no other than this same doctrine revealed by our Saviour to the first disciples. This very thing which Jesus Christ did to the Apostles, His Church continues to do in His name, by His orders, and with His authority to all the faithful, and therefore by listening with docility to His Church is just the same as listening to Jesus Christ. "He who hears you, hears me." Because the teaching of the Church produces in the minds and hearts of the truly faithful, the same precious effects that the revelation of Jesus Christ produced in the minds and hearts of the Apostles, and brings tranquillity, repose to the mind, and joy to the heart.

The peace of God is a mysterious bond that unites, associates and harmonizes all things by placing them in their natural order. Accordingly, it is diffused over all things, it is interwoven in all things created, it is the harmony of their order, and constitutes principally their decorum and beauty. With regard to us men, composed as we are of two substances, soul and body, we participate in this peace in two ways; first with regard to the body, we enjoy tranquillity and peace when the elements

that compose it are in their natural equilibrium, this is called health, and when the members that compose it are perfectly in harmony with each other in their forms and proportions, this is called beauty. Now with regard to the soul, we are participators of this peace when we communicate with God through a virtuous life. This means, in other words, that the mind and heart of man are not in the enjoyment of peace unless they are placed in their natural order, unless they are united to God through their natural relationship of their knowledge and love of God. Now, God is not perfectly known unless through the revelation of faith, and is not truly loved unless through the communication of grace. As, therefore, the Catholic religion is the only and true and legitimate channel of divine revelation, it alone can place the mind in its natural order with reference to God, it, therefore, alone, according to the prophet Isaias, can place us in the tranquil and beauteous bosom of peace.

In order that we may better understand the profundity of this important doctrine, we must advert to the fact that the human mind, passive in its principle, active in its development, has two inclinations equally natural, two innate exigencies, two original and indestructible characteristics, namely, that of believing, and that of reasoning. Religions that are sensual, such as Idolatry, Mohammedanism, imposed on the people by force, and maintained politically, have for their principle that everything is due to authority, and nothing to reason. The

religions based on pride, such as all heretical sects which spring from self-love, and are defended by a spirit of absolute independence, have for their guiding principle, that everything is due to reason and nothing to authority. Now faith, like virtue, holds the middle place, because truth is the virtue of the intellect, as virtue is the truth of the heart. Catholic doctrine, therefore, established and preserved in its integrity and in its purity by the wisdom, power, and love of God, stands between the two systems mentioned above in which are abridged all the religions of human fabric, and has for its principle subjection to reason, to lawful authority, and legitimate use of reason. These sensual religions say, believe without reasoning; the religions of pride cry out, reason without believing; but the Catholic religion preaches, *believe and reason, too.* The natural consequences, therefore, of all these religions of the senses is the extinction of all learning and their last word is *ignorance;* and the natural consequences of the religions of pride is the extinction of all faith and their last word is *Infidelity;* Catholicism alone has for its natural consequence the object of preserving learning and faith and its last word is *believe and learn,* because learning cannot tolerate the yoke of a human and servile faith, neither can faith accept an intemperate and proud teaching that rejects every curb of authority.

In the economy of Catholic teaching, in which independence is reasonable, and reason is dependent, learning has nothing to fear from faith, nor has faith

anything to fear from learning. Learning is a solution that dissolves all metals except gold, which in other words means, that knowledge destroys, annihilates all human religions, but it is impotent against Catholic doctrine because it is heavenly and divine. Where, therefore, sensual religions satisfy the necessity that man has of believing, they elude the necessity that man has of reasoning; and on the contrary, the religions of pride while supporting the necessity of reasoning do not appease that of believing, the Catholic religion alone by commanding us to believe, and by directing learning, solves the great problem of reason and authority, learning and faith, and supplies to man that which contents his double necessity of believing and reasoning, and therefore, places the human intellect in that order that is natural to it, and maintains it there, and this natural order is for the intellect a state of tranquillity and peace.

But these precious effects which Catholic doctrine produces in the natural order, are only the consequences of the far more important effects which it produces in the supernatural order. True faith is not separated from the grace of which it is the gift, and which, while it purifies, elevates, and perfects faith, it makes the mind a secret spring of peace and tranquillity, spiritual and divine, to which heresy is an absolute stranger. The mind of a heretic is dominated by prejudices, tyrannized over by error, and made desolate by doubt. He denies to-day what he conceded yesterday. Timid and uncertain, always agitated by the ebb and flow of contrary opinions, what a contrast

he bears with a member of the Catholic Church who has no need to temper his brain in order that he may reason or discuss the more important parts of religion. He has no need to ask reason or philosophy anything bearing on his faith. He knows everything about God, Christ, the soul, the law, future life, that is necessary to know, and he is certain of it with an absolute, infallible certainty, because Infinite truth has revealed it to him through His church. It is an unequaled privilege to be in possession of the certainty, the fullness, the peace of the true faith. Every Catholic proves this to be so when he believes with an humble, fervent, firm faith, the Word of God revealed and taught by the infallible teaching of the Catholic Church. Let us guard this grand grace of being among the privileged possessors of God's truth, and be transported with joy because we have secured it, let us hold it in the tightened folds around our bosom. There is no longer a distinction between seeing and believing, between possessing it and awaiting it. There appears before our very eyes that which we believe with our minds and love with our hearts. We seem to have a foretaste here on earth through faith, of the first-fruits of that peace of mind, of that infinite joy, the form, the sweetness of the vision of God in heaven. But let us remember that even we, the members of Christ's Church, cannot enjoy this unique and beautiful peace of mind, the fruit of the true faith, unless we possess within our hearts peace in its affections, the fruit of divine grace. The heart that is in tumult through the disorder of its passions does

not permit the joy of the mind to live, which is the calm of the truth of faith. When one lives up to this faith, when faith is in harmony with one's works, when one's life is up to his profession, when the mind harmonizes with the heart, then the peace of God that overcomes every sense of worldly pleasure, descends upon man, takes possession of his soul, and renders it truly happy on earth. O sublime peace of the soul that the world is always promising but never gives. O peace of the soul that comes from the wounds of our crucified Saviour risen from the dead. O peace of the soul that is found at the foot of the Cross, and blossoms only in the meadows of the Church. O peace of the soul that springs up in the mind as the flower of faith and descends to the heart through the possession of divine charity. Hold on to this peace, allow nothing to mar or ruffle it, guard it with a jealous care, and carry it to the bright shores beyond.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE SINNER

Part I

When God infused into the body of man an intelligent soul, He also united Himself to the soul through sanctifying grace, and by elevating the soul to a new and divine life, making it a candidate of heaven, He performed a more prodigious wonder than when He called forth a living body from inert clay.

Man received from the hand of his Creator a double life, a physical life consisting in the union of the soul and body, and a spiritual and divine life consisting in a more exalted union, the union of the soul with God. And as the soul is the source of life to the body, so is God the source of life to the soul. And as the body becomes a corpse when separated from the soul, in like manner the numbness, the paralysis of spiritual death comes on the soul when separated from God. Accordingly, when a soul sins, it becomes separated from God and spiritually dies and lies putrifying in its spiritual tomb. Down in the somber depths of this spiritual sepulcher the voice of God penetrates and says, "Amen, Amen, I say to you, that the hour cometh and is now come, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Yes, the voice of His grace breaks the seal of that spiritual tomb, and the soul will rise to live once more

in the sunshine of God's love. It is certain that Our Saviour during His public mission resurrected many from the grave, but it is not without mystery that we find only three recorded in the Holy Scriptures, that of the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Naim, and Lazarus. The time that each was dead, and the peculiar circumstances attending the resurrection of each vividly express the spiritual death and resurrection of the three classes into which all sinners are divided, the Occult, Public, and Hardened or relapsing sinner.

While our Saviour was addressing a vast multitude on the way of eternal life, one of the great men of Capharnaum approached Him and prostrated himself before Him. It was Jairus, the chief of the Synagogue. "Lord, my little girl is dying," he said, "but come and lay your hands upon her and she shall live." She was a little girl, not yet past her play days, her father's darling. Jesus melting with sympathy, tenderly reassured the father, and started at once in the direction of the Ruler's house. The Apostles accompanied Him; behind them surged an excited throng of publicans and Pharisees. But what a throng! When He tried to pass through the people, they closed around Him like a wall. It was indeed a wall of human misery, blank and vast. The unhappy, the evil, the sick, the curious surround Him. It was like an insurrection of the woe of the world, catching sight for the first time, of the only alleviation it ever had seen. All were eager to see what was going to happen. Jesus and Jairus walked together and while on

the way a servant met them weeping and told them that it was too late, for the little maid was dead. The heart of Jairus was almost broken at the news, but the tender-hearted Nazarene comforted him, "Do not fear but only believe, and she shall be saved." After Jesus arrived at the house He found the delicate body of the little girl lying on her couch dead. Round about it the women were moaning while the shrill keening of the flutes made their cries more dismal. "Weep not," said Jesus, "the child is not dead but sleeps." Some of the mourners began to laugh. But it was a derisive laugh, "a cold sound in that house of woe." The Nazarene ordered all out of the death-chamber but the father and mother, Peter, James, and John. Jesus silently looked on the pallid face of the little girl. She lay unconscious with that wondering look which death casts on childhood. Then He took her by the hand. Her little wasted fingers commenced to quiver and tremble and Jesus said, "Maid, arise." At once the little girl arose and started to run about as usual.

All the circumstances surrounding the death and resurrection of this young girl are a beautiful picture of the young sinner, the sinner we call occult. Very few, probably not even one, suspects that the soul of this person or that is committing sin. Or perhaps the knowledge of her sin or his sin is only known to the associates of their sin. It is a true representation of that sinner who does not suffer much time to intervene between the committal of sin and penitence. A picture of the soul still warm in its spiritual death. A

picture of the soul easily resurrected from its spiritual death. The return to God's friendship, to a spiritual life again, will be a matter of a word from God, provided you address Him as Jairus addressed Him. Lord, help me to have the courage to break away from those associates of sin. Lord, give me water from the fountain of grace to quench those disordinate affections, those corrosive fires that are burning within me. Lord, assist me to sweep out from the chambers of my heart the dust of earthly pleasures that has been accumulating there. Lord, stretch your hand to me, lift me up from my bed of sin. Restore to me the treasure that I lost so easily. Do not suffer me to be tarnished with the filth of the spiritual grave. Let me rise to a new and better life. . . . He replies, "Arise."

On another occasion our Saviour proceeding with His disciples and a multitude of people towards the city of Naim, met a funeral procession coming out of the city. At the head of the procession were the mourners who sent up a chorus of cries and wails, then came the flutists who drew shrill plaintive notes from their pipes. On this occasion their demonstration of woe must have been more wild and clamorous than usual, for they were seeking to give utterance to sorrow such as no tears could wash away. Then came an elderly woman weeping piteously. She was a widow and he that was dead was her only son. Jesus goes up to the mother and addressed her, saying, "Weep not." Behind the weeping mother the bier came; it consisted merely of a flat board. Upon

this lay the dead youth, wrapped in a shroud, so that the face remained uncovered. Christ pushed His way forward to the bier, touched it. The men who carried it knew the meaning of Our Lord's act and stood still. With a gesture clearing a little space for Himself, Jesus lifted His eyes towards heaven. His gaze pierced the sky. His thoughts traveled in prayer to the ears of His Eternal Father. He stooped over the bier, and with majestic intentness He looked into the face of the dead. There stood defiant Life confronting Monarch Death. Then He commanded the body as one commands a being that can obey. "Young man, I say, arise." And the youth awakes, sits up, and begins to speak. Our Saviour takes him by the hand and leads him to his mother's arms.

The Gospel narrative of the death and resurrection to life by our Saviour of the Son of the widow of Naim is a perfect illustration of the spiritual death and resurrection to life of the public sinner, of that class of sinners who disregard all shame, advertise their disorders, flaunt the banner of sin, and scandalize the public by their infamous living. The veil of privacy that hung between the secret sinner and the public is worn to a state of transparency, or removed altogether by the constant friction of the habit of sin, and exposed the soul with all its stainings to the stare of the world. There is no longer a crimson blush on the cheek of the soul, all shame has disappeared and the sinner becomes bold and triumphant in sin. Sinners of this class are no longer confined to the closed doors of their own soul, they have trespassed on the

souls of others, and have inoculated them with the virus that was blood-poisoning and putrifying themselves. They have broken into the treasury of the home of God and committed more than a burglary there. They crept in stealthily and confiscated the treasures of God's grace that ornated and enriched that home of God, and by their infamous association polluted that hallowed precinct. Not content with confining to their own souls the baneful effects of sin, they set traps to catch and cast nets to haul within their meshes of infamy the pure and innocent. Their lives are a seminary where others are trained to commit sin and become corrupted with sin. We have examples of this class of sinner in the adulterous and drunken husband, in the immoral spendthrift son, in the giddy and undutiful daughter who soon becomes the salacious girl of the street who poisons the air through which she moves. This class of sinner is, therefore, responsible not only for their own sins, but also for the sins of those who are scandalized and are led astray by their bad example. In order, therefore, that this class of sinner may rise again to a new life, it is necessary that he should not alone repress his own passions but remove the scandal that he gave, and here lies the great difficulty to be overcome in the conversion of this class of sinner; and the manner of our Saviour in raising the widow's son demonstrates this difficulty. The attitude of our Lord in raising the daughter of Jairus was not so serious or so grave when compared to the attitude or manner He adopted on this occasion. "Young man," He said, "*I com-*

mand you to arise!" Then He took him by the hand and supported him some steps. In like manner the sinner after conversion is still weak. He is not quite recovered from the intoxication of his sinful and pleasurable life; he requires assistance from the hand of God until he becomes strong. Although your culpability may be enormous, although you may have been the teacher of sin and your responsibility serious, you still have left you the power to cancel that signature which has consigned you to pay the penalty of your sins in eternal torments. You may be steeped in the mildew of the grave, but you are not yet buried; you are on the way to burial. You are not yet corrupt, but you are nearing that stage. There is someone weeping for you, there is someone praying for you. It is Mother Church following you, wandering with you in your wanderings, filling up your footprints with her tears that the lost one of her bosom has left her to wallow in the mire of sin. The Nazarene is not far off. He is nigh, He sees those tears, He hears those sobs, those cries, those prayers. His heart is keenly alive to the anguish; it pulsates, it throbs anxiously and gently. There is a halt in the funeral procession of the sinner. A thought rushes to his mind that the grave to which he is being carried on the bier of sin is not the last resting place, that there is a mysterious life beyond it, that there is another land beyond the dark shore of the grave to which we must all migrate, a land of joy or misery. With this thought uppermost in his mind the adulterous drunken husband halts and thinks; the immoral,

youthful spendthrift halts and thinks; the giddy and salacious girl halts and thinks. Not advancing, not retrograding, but rocking, and while in this swaying position in the balance the last grace comes. The winter that had frozen up his heart is broken. There is a softness in the atmosphere of grace, a thaw has set in, his stiff, icy heart melts. God stoops over him, as He stood over the dead body of the youth of Naim. He breathes into his soul the resolution to lead a better life. He hears the loud voice of God commanding him to rise to a new and purer life; he obeys the call of the Nazarene and reoccupies his position in the bosom of his holy Mother, the Church.

As sinners are the most unhappy among men owing to the stings of their rebuking conscience, so the relapsing sinner is the most unhappy among sinners. This condition is most vividly illustrated in the death and resurrection of Lazarus, of whom it is recorded that he was four days buried, and consequently putrefaction had set in.

While our Saviour was still working in the Eastjordan, there came a messenger from the sisters of Lazarus saying that their brother was seriously ill. They dwelt in Bethany, were very pious and devoted to our Lord, and were loved by Him in return. The message they sent our Lord was full of faith, humility, modesty, and touching confidence. "Lord, behold he whom Thou lovest is sick." Although our Lord knew that Lazarus died upon the same day that the message reached Him yet He delayed two days longer where He received the message. At length Jesus

journeyed across the Jordan valley and reached Bethany in the morrow. A great number of sympathizing Jews accompanied Martha to meet Jesus. Casting herself at His feet, dissolved in tears, she said: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother would not now be dead. But I know that even now God will grant you whatever you ask of Him." Jesus lifted His face. Clearly through the stillness arose the voice of the Nazarene uttering for the first time the great words that have thrilled the mourners of the world for the past nineteen hundred years, and which will be uttered in triumph till the burial hour of death itself. "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live, and he that liveth and believeth in Me shall not die forever. Believeth thou this? Yea, Lord, she said. I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, who art come into the world." With this thought uppermost in her mind Martha sped homeward to summon her sister Mary, who was lying tearless, desolate, comfortless, when Martha returned. Approaching her she whispered, "The Master is come and calleth for thee." In a moment Mary was on her way to Jesus. Having arrived she threw herself at the feet of Jesus as Martha did, murmuring the same reproachful words. "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother would not have died." She could say no more, her tears spoke, and she prayed. The poor girl sobbed so bitterly and piteously that the coldest eye in the crowd softened. The Jews seemed to have forgotten their hatred of Christ, and like Mary sobbed.

So mightily did those tokens of love and sorrow shake the soul of Jesus that His spirit was stirred and troubled within Him. Suddenly those standing by heard a heart-breaking sound. It was the groan of a strong and sensitive man. It was Jesus weeping. "Where have you laid him?" he inquired. "Lord, come and see," they replied. There was no more to be said. Lazarus was dead, yea, he was buried. He was locked into the cells of the earth's ancient prison, and despair, the jailer, held the keys. Having arrived at the tomb, "Take away the stone," spoke the Saviour, and Martha answered, Master he is already corrupt, it is four days since He died. Then our Lord replied: "Did I not say to you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" The stone was rolled back, and the body disclosed. Jesus and the tomb faced each other; Defiant Life and Monarch Death confronted each other. The features of the Nazarene were rigid, with eyes toward heaven. He prayed. "Father, I give thanks, that Thou hast heard Me. For Myself I know that Thou hearest me always, but for the sake of these people who stand about Me I have spoken thus, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me." His command like a flash of lightning pierces the darkness of the grave, and rekindles in the dead bones the spark of life. One word from Him rings through the abysses of eternity and brings the soul back from the world beyond. With a loud voice He cried out, "Lazarus, come forth." Through the door or opening of the sepulcher the outlines of a figure moved. The dead man emerged from

the grave with his hands and feet wrapped in the winding bands, with his face shrouded in the linen kerchiefs, and stood among the appalled and silent witnesses of the inconceivable truth. "Loose his hand, said Jesus, and let him go." The cere-cloth fell from off his features, the winding sheets slipped from his limbs and Lazarus was once more in the glow of life.

The miracle was different from the other miracles of this kind wrought by our Lord, as it took place after decay had already set in. "Our Saviour snatched the little daughter of Jairus from the hands of death, the youth of Naim from the jaws of death, but Lazarus from the bowels of death." His remains were putrid, fetid, corrupt, and emitted a foul odor, accordingly represented the class of sinner called habitual and relapsing. It is a true picture of that sinner who for years lies buried in sin, crushed beneath the heavy weight of the habit of sin. No ray of light penetrated the dark tomb of Lazarus, no light of divine grace penetrates the petrified conscience of the hardened, relapsing sinner. The heavenly lights are put out, the soul has retired into its dark and silent tomb. As every virtuous act disposes the soul to another act of virtue, in like manner each sin committed disposes the soul of the sinner to another sin. As grace produces grace, so sin produces sin. As the just ascend higher and higher from virtue to virtue in their climb to heaven, so sinners falling from sin to sin, descend lower and lower towards the abyss of hell. "Woe," says St. Bernard, "to him who familiarizes with sin." No matter how dark the scowl of sin be, no matter

how repulsive its features are, familiarity with it robs it of its fulsomeness. We convince ourselves, sometimes, that a certain necessity compels us to sin, from this necessity is produced a belief that it is impossible to amend our lives, from this belief comes the sin of despair, then nought remains but the tremendous mystery of eternal damnation. We are in a whirlpool and can't extricate ourselves. From the swirl of fashion we slide into the whirl of sinful pleasures, and round and round we dance in the froth and foam of God's wrath until we plunge into the vortex of hell.

We must not wonder at our Lord trembling, groaning, and weeping at the tomb of Lazarus, when we consider that His death and resurrection are a representation of the grief and sorrow of God at the rotten and putrid state of the sinner grown old in sin, and the great difficulty it is to rise to a new life of grace and love of God. He raised Lazarus from the fetid grave, and there is no reason why a ray of His light may not steal its way through a chink of the hardened walls of the sepulcher where the sinner lies buried; there is no reason why a sunbeam should not come from the eternal Sun of Justice to illumine his soul and show him how dark and dismal is the life he is leading buried in the tomb of sin when compared to the life that once he lived when in the noon-day splendor of God's love. A thought rushes to his mind and he considers how fettered and chained he is with the fetters of the habits of sin, and how free he would be if he could only shake off these fetters. A voice whispers to his soul that the cere-cloth of the grave

of sin has blindfolded him and thereby prohibits him from seeing the road he is pursuing to be that one which leads to hell. What is this voice? Whose is this whisper? Where does this ray of light come from? This is the encouraging voice of God speaking to him as He spoke to Martha and Mary. "I am the resurrection and life." This is the voice of God commanding him to remove the heavy weight of sin that is pressing him down and closes the door of the soul to the entrance of God's grace. This, the voice of God praying for him as he lies buried, fetid, rotten, in sin. This is the voice of God crying out to Him as He cried out to Lazarus, "Come forth from that grave of sin. Throw aside these bad associates that are steeped in sin, they will taint you; as the cere-cloths and linaments fell from the risen body of Lazarus disassociate yourselves from those of bad companions who try to still cling to you." Is your name inscribed in that class represented by the daughter of Jairus? If it is, erase it; the Nazarene calls you, "Young maid, arise" from your bed of sin. Are you among that class represented by the son of the widow of Naim? Hark! the Nazarene calls you, "Young man, I say to you, arise from the bier of sin." Are you numbered among that awful black list that is represented by Lazarus? Lo! Look at the Nazarene weeping. He cries out with a loud voice, "Arise, come forth from the grave of sin."

THE RESURRECTION OF THE SINNER

Part II

"I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee."— Luke 15, 18.

Our Saviour was obliged on many occasions during His Galilean preaching to defend Himself against the charge of being too lax in His intercourse with sinners. The Scribes and Pharisees were always carping at Him, and finding fault with Him on this matter. "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." These taunts He answered with the gentle defense that "they that are well have no need of a physician, but they that are sick."

We have as many as three distinct parables of our Lord in each of which the delight of God in the recovery of the penitent sinner is the chief feature. First we have the parable of the shepherd seeking the wandering one of the flock, then that of the woman seeking the groat which she had lost, and, thirdly, the history of the prodigal son. In each case the rejoicing, whether of the owner of the lost sheep, or of the owner of the lost groat, or of the father of the prodigal, is made a distinct and very marked feature in the discourse. "What man of you that hath a hundred sheep and if he shall lose one of them doth leave

the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost, until he find it, and when he hath found it, lay it upon his shoulders rejoicing, and coming home, call together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost? I say to you that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance more than upon ninety-nine who need no penance."

In the circumstances of this parable our Lord paints in a figure the details of His labors and His triumphs. He speaks of the man who leaves ninety-nine out of a hundred sheep in the desert, to go in search of the one sheep that has strayed. He speaks of how he treats it when he has found it, not driving it before him, or even leading it, but he carries it on his shoulders. He searches and calls through the vast, pathless desert until he finds it, and when he has found it he calls his friends to join with him in his rejoicings.

The publicans and sinners with whom our Lord was charged of letting Himself be too familiar, were in His eyes the lost sheep of His flock, for the recovery of whom He was preparing to lay down His life. They were outcasts, as well as lost sheep. They had been lost, sought out and found, and brought home in triumph. If He ate and drank with them as He had done on a former occasion at the feast of St. Matthew, that was a manifestation of joy not to be compared with that which took place in heaven at their conversion. They might feast Him, as Father Meschler says, and entertain Him after their own poor, rough, coarse fashion, but with hearts of sincere love

of the true penitent. He would accept their hospitality, join in their festivities, hallow their banquets such as they were, for His heart was full of ecstatic joy, and in its expansiveness and love of sympathy He would call on heaven to rejoice with Him.

Our Lord gives a second example of the joy that fills His sacred heart on the reclaiming of sinners. It is that of a woman who lost a groat; she lights a candle, searches and sweeps every corner of the house and thus burns almost more candle than the groat is nearly worth, and, having found it, her affectionate solicitude is seen in her joy at recovering the lost object. She communicates it by word of mouth to her sympathizing neighbors and friends and finds an echo in their hearts.

There is a difference between the sheep and the groat that is lost. The coin of which our Lord speaks is stamped with the image of the King, and so may be said to represent something in that respect more precious than the sheep. Man is stamped with the image of God, and, therefore, his soul belongs to a higher range in creation than an animal. And although we must understand man as represented by the sheep, and belonging to God, still the image on the piece of money brings out the truth which the other image does not express. God sees in us His property, and sees His image in us just as a sovereign of a country sees His image on a coin, but that image is almost obliterated by sin. The faint outlines are still there, but the dust of the earth, or the constant habit of sin has worn them away or disfigured their impress,

but God in His mercy wishes to have that impress renewed and the coin restored to the royal treasury.

In these two parables it may be noticed that what is recovered by the owners of the sheep or groat has not been lost by any fault of its own. It is simply a thing lost and missed and regretted and sought and found and rejoiced over, but, continues Father Meschler, in the parable of the Prodigal Son, the object lost is not a material thing, not merely a coin stamped with the divine image, but a child, a being gifted with reason and beloved by his father. This is the real position of man to God; man is a child of God, favored, tenderly loved and raised to the highest dignity and union with Him, with the right of inheritance of the kingdom of His Father. From this ensues the greatness of the error and misfortune when such a being separates himself from God and is lost as the result of his own perversity; still the love of God pursues him and strains itself for his recovery because he belongs to Him.

"A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his substance. And the younger son went into a far-off country, and there wasted his substance living riotously. And after he spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country and he began to be in want. He was obliged to seek employment in herding swine and, suffering from hunger, he had to eat the food of the swine. He commenced to think of the happiness he enjoyed in his father's house, and how

foolish he was to leave it, and even now while he was starving the servants in his father's house were filled with the luxuries of his father's home. I will arise and go unto my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee and I am not worthy to be called thy son. And arising up he came to his father, and when his father saw him, he was moved with compassion, and running to him fell upon his neck and kissed him."

Parables are mines filled with gems. Our Lord in this parable seems to intend us to see that all sin begins in the love of liberty, the love to have our own independence. After the love of independence He places alienation from God, it is from Him we wish to emancipate ourselves, we would be glad if we could be free of Him, get out of His sight, and if possible put Him out of our thoughts. After we get emancipated from God we live riotously, and as the Gospel expressly puts it, " The prodigal son devoured his substance with harlots." When our lower passions master our higher spirit, every thought is molded to their form, and the noblest faculties of our soul become menial servants for their sinful gratification. Our minds then become materialized and our lives sensualized. The Prodigal was allowed to take his fill of worldly and sensual enjoyments, and then he was led to see and feel their utter incapacity to give true and lasting satisfaction. There is always a great famine in the land of the world without God, for the needs and aspirations of the human mind and heart cannot find what they want here, the wants of the soul are of another

kind. There is always a hunger among the children of the world of pleasure, who are so restless in their pursuit of one false good after another and are still over and over again disappointed in what they fondly hope may satisfy the disquiet of their minds and consciences, and furnish some food for the craving of their hearts. The whole voice of human experience teaches us that, after man has gained every object of ambition in this world, he finds nothing that really can make him happy. Man is always in search of an object to which he may attach himself, on which he may rest, and in which he may find content, but he can't find that either in himself or in his environment. It would be the delirium of human pride for the soul to strive to find that object here. The world is an impostor who claims to give what it cannot furnish, promises what it cannot perform. Its pleasures cannot supply the goods which even the lower appetites demand of them. The world has no true goods to give, no wholesome employment on which to occupy its slaves. It is a gilded bubble that breaks into thin air when we touch it. The vicissitudes of history tell a tale of its emptiness and instability; notwithstanding that this stares us in the face, see how many are taken up with its haste and hurry until they become dizzy and giddy from a surfeit of its pleasures, or kneeling before its shrine of business become swallowed up in its gurgling vortex. All it can command is degradation ever lower and lower, the restless, bestial indulgence of the lower passions, grosser and grosser as the appetite loses all remains of refinement and decency.

Are we forced to conclude from these observations that the world is a monument of failure on the part of the Creator, and it were better that there was no world, and no such creature as man? Certainly not. The world and man are a manifestation of God's power and glory and are therefore good. They are mirrors in which shine reflections of his beauty, and a canticle of an endless song of His excellence and glory. But it is the abuse of the world's bounteous gifts and our faculties that disturbs the order of things, and places us in that degraded position pictured by the Prodigal Son feeding with a lowly herd.

God does not abandon sinners. He who gave sight to the blind and relieved the most distressed in body and soul, won't turn His eyes from the penitent sinner. He warns sinners in many ways internally and externally against the moral suicide they are committing. He lets them have their own way if they insist upon it, and His Providence waits upon them as they run on in their reckless course, ever ready to seize on the opportunity which they may give Him of bringing them to their senses by the experience they gather from the emptiness and fickleness of the world, by the slavery of sin, of the need of God of which man cannot divest himself.

The man who has lost one sheep out of one thousand and goes to search after that which was lost, and the woman who has lost her groat do not rest until they find that which they have lost. In the same way God does not cease pleading with the soul which has abandoned Him until his conversion takes place.

But what parable could describe the tenderness, the perseverance, the efficacy of the graces by which God woos back the soul? The change of heart is the beautiful fruit of divine grace which causes the sinner to reflect and say, "How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread and I here perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father and say to Him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, I am not worthy to be called Thy son, make me one of thy hired servants." Here the thought of the goodness of the Father appeals to him, because the menials in His home are abundantly supplied with food. He knows well that by his many crimes he has forfeited his father's love, still his father was so good that he believed he would not turn away from him but offer him the service of a mercenary.

Never did our Lord picture the sinner's wanderings with more vivid colors; every touch in the likeness stirs the soul, and brings back the features of our own life-story before our eyes. For what man of us is there who has lived in this world without knowing, without seeing all around him those very illusions which befooled this prodigal boy, this deceiving mirage which deludes the thirsty traveler in the desert of his sinful life? Who is there among us that does not see in our daily intercourse with our fellow men that thirst for an unbridled and unhampered liberty, that passing intoxication of freedom which devoured the Prodigal Son? Do we not see the prodigal child of the gospel at every street corner of our city, whose

heart has become an outlet for his soul to stray away from divine grace and to adore and worship the false god of concupiscence?

Away in the wild woods, the lion and tiger, the bear and the panther when kindly treated hear with obedience the voice of their master, and lick the hand of him who feeds them, but the prodigal son of the world gluts himself with the bounteous gifts of God as if he had no master to thank, no God-Giver to worship, no Judge to fear, no thunderbolts to dread. Is not the earth furnished by God with good things for our benefit? The animal kingdom is created by Him for our utility and delight; the vegetable kingdom with various species both for our ornament as well as for our sustenance; the mineral world is inexhaustible with its precious metals for our profit, and its gems to adorn our beauty; the heavens labor incessantly for us; by the command of God they rain down their moisture and assisted by the warmth of the sun impart fecundity to the sterile land, in consequence of which the golden harvests yield their abundance, and the trees drop their mellow fruits for us. All the elements are tributaries from God to nourish and to sustain us. All combine to work for us at the command of Him who rules all, and what return do we make to God for this unparalleled goodness? The answer is black ingratitude; nay, more, we enjoy these gifts like the prodigal son, as a seasoning for our sensuous appetites, and worship them as a god confined to the limits of the world.

What is the result of the whir of this loud-resound-

ing century with its steam engines, its printing presses, its complicated network of railroads, and electric appliances but to drown the voice of God and pile up riches upon the altar of wealth for man to adore and worship profoundly! What is the result of pampering ourselves with all the bounteous gifts of God but to make life a luxury, and by feasting and revelry render that life a sordid sty where man imbrutes himself! What is the issue of all our intellectual toil and worry but a hunger for vainglory, for the different stages of history are like so many sign-boards pointing out to us the heroic deeds of men stained with the dark plots of blind pride and mad ambition.

Would to God we could say with the poet, "Vain pomp and glory of the world, I hate thee." Would to God we could say with the wise King, "Vanity of vanities and all is vanity." Would to God we could say with the Prodigal Son of the gospel, "I will return to the house of my father, and say, Father, I have sinned against heaven and Thee, I am not worthy to be called Thy son." Who is it among men, who has not felt himself to be living in a strange land when he is living an existence without God? Who is it that does not feel a yearning, a void within him which his passions are powerless to satisfy? Who is it that does not feel the awful anguish clutching his awakening soul to his enthrallment in the companionship of a filthy herd? Happy is the man who amid this heart-heaviness lifts his eyes heavenward, rises up and returns to his God. Thrice happy is that soul, which, when overwhelmed with the realization of its sins, re-

members the forgiveness whereof Jesus held forth such marvelous tokens. While the ruined spendthrift is still afar off, his father sees him, he is filled with pitifulness for his boy, makes haste towards him, falls upon his neck and kisses him, and says to his servants, bring forth the richest robe and put it on him, and place a ring upon his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, let us eat and make good cheer, for this son of mine was dead, and is brought to life again, he was lost and is found. All this joy is found in the fact that a confession from sin is a recovery of what had been lost, a coming to life of what had been dead, for there is such a thing in this warm earth as a dead soul.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE SINNER

Part III

"Pray that your flight may not be in winter."— Matth. 24.

The descriptive narrative of the last day by St. Matthew should send a shiver through every credulous reader. Words and imagination fail to give expression or realize the trembling and crouching fear of man at the awe-stricken appearance of that dreadful day — the day of wrath, the day of anger, the day of judgment.

When the graves will become tenantless, and the sheeted dead will rise for final judgment.

> "By the clock 'tis day
> And yet night strangles the traveling lamp
> That darkness does the face of the earth entomb
> When living light should kiss it."

And sinful man will appeal to the Sun and Moon to hide their fires, and the blinking stars to quench their lights, to cover up light with the blanket of darkness, that he may not see the coming of his Judge. And to the yesty waves that confound and swallow up navigation, he will cry: "Burst your shores, break those bonds that prison your waters, that in their wild rush I may be swallowed up in their briny depths. And ye, O mountains of untold time, whose

peaks kiss heaven, melt and dissolve, and into your boiling cauldron let me sink that I may not see my avenging God."

Bearing on this subject I wish to give you an account of what came under my own observation in Italy during an earthquake.

On a summer's evening when the beautiful azure sky of Italy appeared to be as calm as heaven, and nothing appeared likely to disturb its serenity, suddenly the blue canopy changed into a lurid glare. Then clouds stealthily crept from their hiding-places and hung lazily between the sky and the earth. At first they glowed with a golden glow and appeared as if interlaced with fire; here and there were deep red spots and streaks as if they were stabbed and gashed by the strokes of a mighty sword. Then by degrees this fiery appearance grew pale and silvery, then changed into a lead-like color, until at last an inky cloak covered the whole heavens. Large heavy squadrons of clouds mustered and careered before the winds, like the serried ranks of two bitter and opposing armies awaiting the command to battle. They looked angry and scowling. We heard in the distance the first alarm of battle, the signal was a low murmuring peal of thunder, then it sounded like "cars rattling over a stony street," then came the loud roar of heaven's artillery. Peal rattled on top of peal, and louder and louder grew that rattle, and deeper and deeper grew that roar. Like the barking and crackling of rifles, and the booming of artillery the thunder rang out unceasingly, and the deep muffled growls from the

earth's bowels appeared to be the reverberating echoes. The inky looking heavens were now and then aglow with the flashes of lightning, which were as varied in their colors as they were in their shapes, sometimes zigzag, sometimes like Neptune's trident, and sometimes like the broad flashing sword of the avenging God. God seemed angry at something, for He shot His bolts hither and thither with avenging quickness. As the battle of the heavens raged, a low hoarse growl was heard beneath our feet, and without further warning the earth trembled and quaked, houses rocked and toppled over, crushing their terrified inmates beneath the débris. The dumb animals were panic-stricken, they realized that the physical laws of nature were unhinged, that there was an unusual jarring and disruptive noise. The horses neighed and stampeded, the cows lowed, the sheep bleated, and the fowls both domestic and wild flew from their roosts and sought protection from man, and man sought protection in prayer to God to have mercy on him. The majority of the inhabitants of the city fled from the crumbling walls and camped on an adjacent hill believing it to be the safest refuge. And while there with glistening eyes and throbbing hearts, absorbed in prayer supplicating God's mercy, quite unexpectedly the hill shook, and from its summit gushed a torrent of black liquid lava as if hell had burst, and rolling and rushing in giant-like bounds down the sides of the hill it carried some hundreds of human beings amid shrieks and groans into a chasm that yawned from the bursting of the earth's crust.

If such be the confusion, terror and consternation resulting from a disturbance of the earth's elements in only a small corner of the world, what must we expect when the whole earth and heavens are rocking to pieces, and God, their Master, appears to pass judgment on His creatures.

With what deep reflection ought we not to hear and profit by the warning given to us by Christ when He says to prepare for that dreadful day, a warning in clear and unmistakable language, "Pray that your flight may not be in winter." For those who make a journey in winter have difficulties and obstacles to overcome and encounter that mar to a great extent the success of their journey. First, the winds are cold and sharp, "the air bites shrewdly." Second, the earth is sluggish and heavy which renders the roads almost impassable. Third, the sun shines for less time and with less warmth. The mystical meaning of our Lord's words is a warning to sinners not to postpone their conversion from a life of sin to a life of virtue, to that last hour of illness, because inconveniences arising in that last term of life approaching death are so numerous and insurmountable as to render us powerless to make peace with the offended majesty of God. It is the winter time of our life, when all that is mortal is withering, and the decaying appearance of the world's garment portrays the inertness and soulless powers of all our faculties. Prepare therefore beforehand and do not defer reconciliation with your God to those hours when you will be unable to do so. Temptations are like the winds; storms

concentrate their energies during the day that they may burst forth with greater fury towards evening. "Woe to the earth and the sea," says St. John, "because the devil has come down unto you having great wrath, knowing that he had but a short time" (Apoc. 12). The perverse will of the sinner is to be more dreaded at the hour of death than at any other time; for his heart has become as cold as a block of ice, and its sluggishness and indifference can be compared to the heaviness and inertness of the earth during winter. The eyes of his soul will become veiled with a great blindness, and the impenetrable darkness of the approaching night of death has already set in and enveloped him in its thick folds. "Give ye glory to the Lord your God, before it be dark, and before your feet stumble on the dark mountains; you shall look for light and He shall turn it into the shadow of death and darkness." Thus spoke the Prophet Jeremiah.

The principal cause of winter is the withdrawal of the sun's heat from the earth although the sun is nearer to the earth than in the summer time. Owing to this withdrawal of heat the earth becomes congealed and lifeless. God acts similarly towards the soul of a hardened sinner. He withdraws the rays of His divine grace, and owing to this withdrawal there is no warmth of the love of God in that soul, consequently it becomes cold, stiff, inert, and lifeless. St. Paul admonishes us how we should make our life profitable by laying up treasures in the observance of God's law with which wealth we secure rich dividends. "In an accepted time have I heard thee, and in the

day of salvation have I helped thee. Behold now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation" (II Cor.). And in the Book of Proverbs we read the fearful words of God addressed to those who do not profit of the words referred to by St. Paul. "Then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear, they shall rise in the morning and shall not find me, because they have hated instruction and have not received the fear of the Lord" (Prov. 1).

With such a warning are we not unreasonable and unjust to ourselves if we do not avail ourselves of the many favorable opportunities afforded us to fortify the citadel of our soul when time is at our disposal by laying in a store of spiritual strength for that severe ordeal and combat that must take place at the hour of death. All men, in every sphere and stage of life, toil and labor to obtain the one object of that avocation in which they are placed. The general in command as well as the soldier in the rank and file occupy their time in studying strategy and drill that will bring them victory in the battlefield. The advocate devotes all his energies in collecting evidence, and sifts and probes the arguments of the prosecutor that he may win his client's case. The athlete spends many months in severe training that he may become a champion. Each and all concentrate their time, their intellect, their physical powers, to gain that one object which each is in pursuit of; they do not defer their preparation to the day of contest, if they did, their attempts would be futile. No, but day after day, month after month, year after year, brain, sinew, and

muscle are called into service to get possession of the coveted prize, a prize that rust can eat and the moth can destroy, a prize that is transient, that will mold and wither away. But what little time do we give, what indifference do we show towards the winning of that prize which nothing can corrode, the prize of all prizes, the home of happiness in the eternal kingdom of God!

"LET US PRAY"

"And I will pour out on the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace, and of prayers."—ZACHARIAS 12. 10.

One of the most baneful dreams of pagan philosophy was a belief that man had no need of a Deity to acquire truth or practice good; and therefore for this purpose he should not demand of God any aid. From this source arose the infamous blasphemy of the Stoics, viz.: "That on no account should virtuous actions be attributed to God." From this impure spring was derived that sacrilegious sarcasm of the Epicureans which taught that "God gives us riches and life, but with regard to probity of heart we have no need of Him, we are quite sufficient of ourselves."

What were the dreadful effects of this pernicious doctrine? The Royal Prophet has depicted them for us, when speaking of his own days he graphically portrays the future. "The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God. They are corrupt, and are become abominable in their ways: there is none that doth good, no not one. The Lord hath looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there be any that understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are become unprofitable together: there is none that doth good, no not one. Their

throat is an open sepulcher: with their tongues they acted deceitfully; the poison of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and unhappiness in their ways: and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." It was a time when humanity exerted itself to forget the God of probity, the God of purity and everything that was immaculate, and to worship the god of lewdness and sin. The age was grewsome, revolting and horrible. There was no pure atmosphere in those days, a murky, ulcerated, pestiferous atmosphere hung around the souls of men as a filthy pall, and all the soul's faculties under this inky polluted shroud became diseased, perverted, and degenerate. Every passion of man had its shrine, and around that shrine the soul steeped in its lecherous passions worshiped the god of uncleanliness. Into what deep abysses of degradation did not heathenism fling man? What did the Saviour of the world do to draw man from this abyss, and introduce into his soul that fertile sanctity which he divorced? The Prophet Zacharias tells us in the words quoted: "I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and prayers."

Truly may this spirit be called the spirit of grace and prayer. Because from the time of our Lord's death, it lives and breathes in Christianity. It provokes the divine mercy, it persuades the divine majesty, and sustains us in our weakness. It raises man to God and brings God to man. It bridges the mighty

chasm that separates heaven from earth. Prayer is a substitute for the bodily presence of Jesus. In prayer we keep up a continual conversation with God, we invite Him into a room within the walls of our soul and there in sweet communings we speak to Him. And while enamored with the presence of our divine Guest we breathe those unspeakable moanings, those songs of exile often choked with the hot tears of love that our union with our God is so long deferred. A soul without prayer is like a plucked flower. There was beauty, there was color, there was perfume when that flower bloomed, but now it is withered and all have disappeared; a soul that prays has with it the beauty, the bloom, the perfume of heaven, but a soul that does not pray wears the false colors of the world, and its sweet-smelling perfume is substituted by that which rises from the mildew of spiritual death.

St. Luke on one occasion asked our Lord to teach him how to pray, but St. Matthew in his narrative of the prayer of the Canaanite woman shows us the conditions that should accompany prayer. When Christ left Judea and journeyed towards Tyre and Sidon in the territory of the Canaanites, we would be inclined to attribute His departure from Judea to the calumnies of the Scribes and Pharisees with reference to Himself. No! He did not leave for this reason, He did not abandon His people as a punishment but as an invention of His mercy. Paternal love is as industrious as it is tender. When a loving father does not find in his children a corresponding obedience

and affection he pretends to leave his property to strangers, he threatens to disinherit them, and thus utilizes the threat as a corrective of their faults. In like manner did our blessed Lord leave Judea and pass into the lands of Cana, so that by His action He might draw to Himself the hearts of the Jewish people by showing them that there was a probability of their losing, through their ingratitude, the grace of His coming.

Among the crowd of people who were accompanying our Lord on this occasion, there was a woman with a pallid countenance, dishevelled hair, neglected in dress, startled looking eyes; her whole appearance indicated some great trouble. Desolate looking and weeping she approaches our Lord and cries aloud. "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David: my daughter is grievously troubled with a devil." She was a woman of high rank, a Canaanite. She commenced her prayer based upon a pure and perfect *faith* supported by a remarkable *confidence*. From the gospel narrative she would appear to say: "You, the son of God, and the son of David. Thou who art God but now being made man you inspire me with a full confidence of your power and goodness. The angels may tremble before God in heaven, but I a miserable woman have no fear to approach God made man, for this hast Thou become man that man present himself to you, and speak to you, and show you his wounds, O divine Healer. I have no need of a mediator. I come myself without fear as a daughter of man and ask that mercy which man cannot deny

to man." And what reply does Christ make to the prayer of this distracted woman, a prayer so full of faith, confidence and fervor? He does not even look at her. He pretends not to hear her. He pays no attention to her. But how comes this? An afflicted mother prays, implores, pierces the azure sky with her cries, and Christ is silent. St. Chrysostom solves this mysterious silence of Our Lord. "It is not the effect," he says, "of hardness of heart, but it is the industry of His love." While He appears to despise the suppliant He wishes to afford her an opportunity of showing to the world the profound wisdom, the precious virtue of *perseverance* that she had locked up in her soul. If Christ had tarried with a reply, it was not because the Doctor of mercy despised the prayer of the miserable, but to give us to understand, that to obtain the spirit of grace, the *perseverance* of the spirit of prayer is necessary. We see this clearly illustrated in the action of this woman, when she saw her prayer received with such cold indifference, not even worthy of a reply. She did not lose confidence or courage, or return heart-broken and despondent to her home where her more miserable daughter lay; far from it, she continued on the way still crying out: "Oh, Son of David have pity on me." Her cries so arrested the attention of the Apostles that they addressed our Lord, and requested Him to send her away for "she crieth after us." But the intercession of the Apostles was not more successful than that of the woman herself, for our Saviour appeared to assume an air of cold contempt.

"I was not," He said, "sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel." The Apostles then turning to the woman, probably may have said to her: You see yourself that He has decided not to hear your prayer. It is quite useless for you to persist any longer. Return in peace. The words of the Apostles had no effect on her, for she still cried aloud, "Lord have pity on me."

As the bird cannot fly unless both wings are brought into action, so is it with prayer, to faith must be joined humility. These are the wings with which we can fly in the hour of prayer to lofty heights, and without these we must remain glued to the earth. As humility without faith would be debasement, so would faith without humility be presumption, and presumptive pride has no hope of obtaining a favor from God, for it is to the humble that He opens the treasury of His gifts.

Meanwhile our Lord entered a house and cautioned the disciples not to inform anyone of His whereabouts. But in vain could He conceal Himself from her who sought consolation both for her own soul as well as for that of her daughter. She searched to and fro among the multitude for our Lord, and entering the house where He was concealed, seeing Him she rushed to where He was seated and throwing herself at His feet she adored Him and flung her anguished prayer at Him, "Lord, help me." Here we would imagine that the Heart of the Saviour would at once yield when He saw a mother broken-hearted, prostrated, adoring Him, and crying out, "Lord, help me." He

who defended the adulterous woman, He who advocated the cause of the Magdalen, and dismissed both full of joy and gratitude for the divine graces received, He who knew what maternal love was now saw a mother's bleeding heart throbbing in a piteous prayer for relief, "Lord, won't you help me?" NO! said the meek Lamb of God whose gentle voice was always sweet to those afflicted! NO! said the Light of the world who gave sight to the blind. NO! said the Divine Healer who dried up the sores of the ulcerous and the leprous. NO! said the voice of the Omnipotent at whose utterance demons fled to hide themselves in the dark dungeons of hell. NO! said Jesus. "For it is not good to take the bread of the children, and to cast it to dogs." At such an expression coming from the lips of Christ we would be forced to conclude, that had she not faith she would have arisen from her prostrate position not alone in disgust, but boiling with anger; and between the grief at being repulsed and shame at being called a dog there should be no wonder if her humility changed into pride, her faith into contempt, her adoration into blasphemy. No, she does not speak so, she does not act so, but with an air of modesty, simplicity, and candor she quickly replies, "Yes, I am a dog, and the whelps eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table, therefore I am entitled to a crumb." What a reply, what memorable words, which are we to admire most, the force of faith, the heroism of her patience, or the wonder of her humility? Not alone does she give the title of Lord to Christ; not alone does she call the

Jews children dear to our Lord, not alone does she consider herself a dog when compared to them, but she proclaims the Jews her superior; she humbles herself before all, she places herself at the feet of all. Her words sublime in their simplicity, eloquent in their precision found the avenue that led to the heart of Jesus. They deposed the austerity of His countenance, they broke the curb that held His tenderness, they unlocked His heart, and with a heavenly sweetness beaming on the face of our Lord He turned towards the woman and addressed her. "Oh, woman, great is thy faith, be it done unto thee as thou wilt: and her daughter was cured from that hour." Thus do we see in the apparent hardness of our Lord the industrious artifice of a most tender charity. He did not call her a dog except to win for her the merit of being a patient and humble woman according to His heart. He did not defer the granting of her prayer except to make it more complete and prompt. He did not treat her as a stranger except to elevate her to the rank of His own family to whom He denies nothing. He did not wish to despise her as a Gentile except for the purpose of proposing her as a model for all Christians. He did not humble her except that he might exalt her. We find therefore in fervent prayer the medicine for all the infirmities of the soul, the balsam of all kinds of wounds, the comfort of the afflicted, the antidote of vice; it will quench the corrosive fires of our passions to a cold cinder: fervent prayer is moreover the staff upon which all virtues lean, the fountain of all grace, the

key that locks hell and opens heaven. Remember that in no matter what sphere of life you move, you are but a poor mariner tempest-tossed on the wide ocean of a world that is cold and shelterless, and whether its wild waves, upon which your little bark floats, be dark and sullen, or bear the white crest of joy, let your chart and compass be prayer as you drift along, and it will be the friendly sail too that will pick you up and bring you into the placid waters, into the calm of the peace of God.

BLESSED EUCHARIST

Part I

"Behold this child is set for the fall and resurrection of many in Israel."—Luke 7. 24.

These words were prophesied by Simeon of the Infant Jesus, and are verified in His history, and in the history of His doctrine and religion. This religion and this doctrine, which is the source of resurrection and life for some, and for ruin and death of others, has met and will always meet in the world many loving souls who seek it, and many who are indifferent towards it; disciples who will embrace it, and enemies who will impugn it; panegyrists who will laud it, and detractors who will discredit it; martyrs who will confess it, and tyrants who will persecute it; and amid the acclamations of some and the blasphemies of others, loved and hated, honored and derided, like unto its divine Author, it shows to us its career upon earth by leaving the one to perish and elevating the other to eternal life.

Of all the doctrines of Jesus Christ, of all the mysteries of His holy religion, the prophecy of that holy old man is particularly fulfilled in the ineffable doctrine and sublime mystery of the Blessed Eucharist. In as much as it is the object of devotion, adoration,

and worship, the symbol of unity, the hope, the life, the love, and delight of the Church, it is in like manner the object of contradiction, of sarcasm, of insult, and the blasphemy of heresy. We can also say of Jesus Christ hidden in this mystery, "Behold He is set for the ruin and the resurrection of many in Israel."

When our Lord was promising that He would institute this sublime Sacrament, in the different dispositions with which this promise or revelation was received is vividly represented the injustice of those Christians who to-day impugn it, and the virtue, the glory, the felicity of those who believe in it.

After the miracle of the loaves and fishes the multitude followed our Lord. Seeing the people following Him, He thus addressed them: "Amen, Amen, I say to you, you seek me, not because you have seen miracles but because you did eat of the loaves and were filled . . . labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting which the Son of Man will give you."

"They said therefore unto Him: What shall we do that we may work the works of God?"

"Jesus answered them and said. This is the work of God that you believe in Him whom He hath sent."

"They said therefore to Him: What sign therefore dost thou show that we may see and believe in thee? What dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written. He gave them bread from heaven to eat."

"Then Jesus said to them. Amen, Amen, I say to

you. Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven."

"They said therefore unto Him. Lord, give us always this bread."

"And Jesus saith to them, I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst."

"The Jews therefore murmured at Him because He had said: I am the living bread which came down from heaven. Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph and Mary, whose father and mother we know? How then saith thee, I came down from heaven?"

"Jesus therefore answered and said to them: Murmur not among yourselves. I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert and are dead. . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven. . . . If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world."

"The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying: How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"

"Then Jesus said to them: Amen, Amen, I say to you; except you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath life everlasting, and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in him."

So spoke the Eternal Word of God publicly in the

Synagogue in the presence of a great multitude, before the Pharisees, the Scribes, Sadducees, disciples, and Apostles. The more they murmured the more emphatic did our Lord become in inculcating this doctrine which He was now only foretelling.

But now let us see how the disciples and apostles received this doctrine. When a general with his army engaged in battle against a strong and powerful enemy sees in the fiercest part of the fight a section of his soldiers desert him and fly to the ranks of the enemy, what must not be the dismay of that general! Or when a loving parent sees his children not alone forsake him in the hour of distress and anguish, but assist the hand of a crushing opponent, what must the thoughts of that parent be? Not alone did the Jews reject what Christ was teaching, but His own disciples hearing Him, said: "This is hard and who can bear it?" Yes, the opposing ranks of our Lord's enemies are swollen, the opposition grows, incredulity becomes more manifest. Under these peculiar circumstances what is the action of our Lord? Instead of removing the difficulty that filled the mind of His disciples that He might win them back, He increases the difficulty by saying: "I see that my discourse confounds you, scandalizes you. You cannot be persuaded that it is possible for Me to give you My flesh to eat while on earth, but this difficulty will increase when I have ascended to heaven with My body, yet I will give it to man to eat on earth. After this many of the disciples went back, and walked no more with Him."

Our Lord then turned to the apostles and said: "Will you also go away?" You have heard the difficulty, you have heard My doctrine, you have heard the mystery revealed. Do you believe in the promise I made? Am I exacting too much of your reason? Select now whom are you to follow. Either be with those who sooner than humiliate their intellect, abandon Me, or receive with humility of spirit My words and remain with Me. Peter's heart was touched at these words, and he suddenly burst forth in an eloquent act of faith. "Lord, to whom shall we go but to Thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life!"

One year passed in the life of our Lord before that ever-memorable night came when at supper with His twelve apostles He fulfilled the promise made in the revelation which I have just described according to St. John. Having washed the feet of the apostles, He returned to His place at the table, and taking bread into His hands He blessed it, saying: "Take ye and eat of this, for this is my Body. And taking the chalice He gave thanks: and gave them to drink, saying: Drink ye all of this for this is my Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins." He becomes an integral part of creation, institutes the Most Holy Sacrifice of the New Testament, and founds the Catholic Priesthood. How simple are these words, yet how sublime; how plain, yet how mysterious; how very short, yet how eloquent. He fulfilled the promise which He clearly defined some twelve months previous. He selected earthly bread to be the matter to cover the invisible

and heavenly bread. Under the accidents of corporal bread which sustains the life of the body, is concealed the spiritual nourishment that renders both body and soul immortal. The apostles see there and then the truth of the mystery which they heard promised, and believed. This is the bread from heaven, superior to the manna. This is the source of the divine comfort which He promised to give them. We seem to hear Christ saying: "In this bread, no longer bread, I have placed my Body. In this wine, no longer wine, I have placed my Blood. You see now that HOW which your companions wished to examine. You see that HOW, while still living with you, I can give my flesh in food, and my blood in drink. You see now HOW is accomplished the mystery which was the subject of such murmurings and of such apostasy when I revealed it. Take and eat, there is no room here for symbols or figures, but substance and reality. Moreover, I commission you to do this very similar act that you have seen me do. By the power of My word pronounced by you, and by your successors upon similar matter, bread and wine, you likewise will change them into My body and blood."

Have the apostles and their successors faithfully carried out these instructions? Yes. During the early centuries of the Church when the ministers of imperial vengeance perpetrated upon the disciples of Christ every form of punishment on account of their faith, the early Christians were permitted to retain in their houses and carry with them the Blessed Sacrament, in order that by receiving it they would derive

more courage to confess Jesus Christ in the hour of martyrdom. Again, those who are called catechumens were not in those days of persecution allowed to receive instructions on so august a Sacrament until they were first baptized. Why this rigorous prohibition; why this great respect for the Blessed Sacrament unless there was a firm belief in the Real Presence?

About one thousand years before the coming of our Lord on earth, the Royal Prophet prophesied. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together against the Lord, and against His Christ" (Ps. 2). But the impious raised their sacrilegious hands not alone against the Son of God-made man, but also directed their poisonous shafts against His divine Presence in the Blessed Sacrament by declaring it to be contrary to reason that one substance should be changed into another. There is nothing strange about one substance being changed into another, we see this occurring every day before our eyes. What is vegetation under the laws of nature but the conversion of one substance into another? Water from heaven, air, heat, earth, are changed into herbs, plants of the valleys and the mountains, into the trees of the forest, into the flowers and fruits of the garden. The bread we eat is a combination of many things transformed into grain. And all these changes are done by that very same God who converted the bread that once was earth into His Body.

Do we not see evidence in our own bodies, clear and decisive, of a mystery somewhat similar? Is not the food we eat changed into other substances to form our

body and nourish it? Why, therefore, should we deny to the power of God in His heavenly laboratory that which is being done momentarily in the laboratory of nature? Neither do we understand how these things are done in the order of nature. Nevertheless, we have not the slightest doubt about their being done. Why not, therefore, believe in that eucharistic change, in that miracle of grace, although we don't understand it?

But they urge that it is impossible that the whole Body of Christ be whole and entire in each particle of the Host. Why not? Could not the omnipotence of God do so? Is not the whole of this body of ours found once in a small germ? Was not the mighty oak of the forest once in a small seed? Is not the eye of man a small thing yet see all it contains by reflection. Look over the plain and mountain side covered with innumerable objects, yet all these are contained by reflection in the eye. Break a mirror into several parts and each part will reflect your face. For the same reason do we say that the small particle of the Host contains not alone our Lord whole and entire, but each particular part contains Him at the same time. Where is your soul? Philosophy speaks and maintains that it is there where it is felt, but we feel it in every part of the body; therefore it is whole and entire in every part of the body as it is whole and entire in the whole of the body. Where is God? He is in the world and in every part of the world. Why, therefore, cannot God put His humanity whole and entire in every part of that Host in which is found His divinity? But

the enemies of the Real Presence say, in our illustrations of changeable substances the appearances change; in the species of bread and wine after God takes up His residence there is no change of the appearances, while they say we maintain there is a change of substance; hence these are not correct illustrations. We do not maintain that they are perfect illustrations, because we are treating of a mystery which we shall never understand in this life of limitations. But bearing on this particular matter about the appearances not changing while the substance changes. In nature we have a piece of petrified wood retaining its appearances while its substance changes. Yes, the Blessed Sacrament is a great mystery; there, hidden in that small particle is the omnipotent God, an everlasting victim of burning love. How He is there we cannot explain any more than we can explain how a wonderful power is locked up in a piece of coal which was formed millions of years before man was made, in the carboniferous period, the age of gorgeous flora when a rank and luxuriant herbage cumbered every foot of the dank and steaming soil. Beneath this mass of black mineral lies a power almost incomprehensible, witnesses of which we have in the flames that roar in our chimneys, in the glowing furnaces that smelt our metals, in the moving power given to our ponderous engines that haul long dusky trains over the complicated network of our railroads, and to those gigantic ships that ride triumphantly the foaming ocean defying the raging storm. The marvelous force of electricity is another striking example of these hidden agents which we

harness and use for our great benefit, but what they are and how they are there we cannot explain. Why, therefore, should we be so exacting as to deny the presence of a Great Power concealed under the sacramental species because we cannot see it?

True philosophy teaches that in all bodies there are matter and form, accidents and substances. The accidents of matter are the taste and color and form. These are separate from the substance by virtue of Him who has created both the substance and the accidents under which the substance lies concealed. Our senses see the accidents only; the judging of the substance does not come under the duties of the senses, but belongs to the intellect. Faith then proposes that the substance of the bread is changed into the substance of the Body of our Lord, while the accidents, by divine virtue, divided from their natural substance remain the same. By the aid of our senses we only see the accidents in the Eucharistic bread, hence they are not deceived. Faith, therefore, does not contradict the senses but illumines the intellect and tells it that the substance of the bread is no longer there but has been changed into the Body of our Lord. Faith corrects the judgment of the intellect. Behind the sacramental veil of bread and wine we believe lies hidden from our senses the power of the omnipotent God who hurls thunderbolts against wicked men, the God who holds up the spheres and the reins of their government in His hands, the God whose voice assigned to the heavenly orbs their respective positions and by His orders move in regulated rotation singing an endless

song of His excellence and His glory. We believe that behind the sacramental species is the soft and gentle voice of welcome of the meek Lamb of God to those who approach Him and receive Him worthily, as well as the roar of the lion of Juda against those who receive Him sacrilegiously. We believe behind the Eucharistic veil lies the adorable Heart that is ever pulsating under the vibration of love for man as well as sending up an incense offering of infinite value to the God-head. Every breath of our prayer, every aspiration of our love, every sigh of our agony stirs the mighty ocean of love of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Although He may be hidden from our view yet He is keenly alive to all that passes around Him. He catches every whisper of His visitors. His adorable Heart is tremblingly alive to the whispering accents of our love.

Why not, therefore, cry out like St. Peter, "To whom, Lord, should we go except to thee, for thou hast the words of eternal life?" Every other teaching but Thine is deceitful. Every other light but Thee is darkness. It is for You to speak; for us to listen. It is for You to command and for us to obey. You are the Pastor; we are the sheep of the fold. You are our Master; we the disciples. You are God; we are men. Behold the everlasting fountain of divine grace where the criminal stainings of human nature are washed away. The fountain in whose regenerating waters every form of sinful disease is cleansed. To whom, therefore, should we go but to Thee, O Lord? You are the Divine Physician who has brought us

every medicine of which our sick nature stood in need of. If our disease be pride we see God coming to us in humility. If our disease be sensuality we see God suffering in a flesh like our own, and giving us the law of self-denial as a cure in His example, for He lies under the sacramental species as a victim. If our disease be a hungering for the world's riches we see the inexhaustible wealth of God dwelling in poverty. Yes, to whom should we go but to Thee, O Lord? Thou art the fountain of eternal light and life.

BLESSED EUCHARIST

Part II

"We being many are one Body, one Bread, all partake of the same Bread."— Paul, I Ep. Cor. 10. 17.

By these words we are brought face to face with the august mystery which is both the sacrifice whereby God receives the honor due to Him, and the sacrament containing within itself the nourishment of our souls. By these words we can have a clearer understanding of the unspeakable gift which our Saviour vouchsafed to bestow upon us the night before He suffered — a gift that speaks to us of the deifying relation which is made to exist between God and the soul. The Holy Ghost has shed his light upon this truth. He has opened out the very depth of the mystery shown to us from the outset, the mystery of the Emmanuel. This Hebrew word means, God with us, and the prophet Isaias stating, that a virgin would conceive and bear a son and that his name shall be Emmanuel, clearly revealed not only the great mystery of the Incarnation of the divine and human natures in one Person, but furthermore by his prophetic words unveiled to us the wonderful mystery of the Blessed Eucharist, by which God, the Emmanuel, is not alone with man, but dwells in man.

The primary object that God had in creating man was that man should live in union with God here on earth by loving Him, and when he had left this world he would continue that love and union hereafter in heaven. But by the sin of our first parents that state of love and union was broken up. And it took an infinite Being to restore that union by appeasing the offended majesty of God. The means chosen by God to have that union restored was to send the Second Person of the adorable Trinity on earth to assume a human nature in the mystery of the Incarnation, and by victimizing that Man-God the offended majesty of God would be appeased and man restored to the loving embrace of God once more.

However, before this great sacrifice would take place, God suggested sacrifices and rites to be made by the people figurative of that one sacrifice of the Adorable Victim. These sacrifices which were prescribed by God, were the ritual expression of man's early worship of God, and were offered by all generations from Eden to Calvary; and even when idolatry lead mankind into the abyss of every crime, those sacrifices raised up their voice and kept up the prophecy which they were intended to proclaim, the prophecy of a victim of infinite worth. No doubt the mighty river of primitive tradition became impregnated with filthy elements as it flowed along, and transmitted worthless detritus and dangerous material in its muddy course; still it was through the rite of sacrifice the expectation of Christ was main-

tained among nations. They kept alive the remembrance of man's fall and the expectation of a Redeemer. They had another duty to perform besides representing the redemptive element, they expressed also the union of God with man which was the primary object of man's creation. And they did it in the following manner: The general law observed by all nations when offering sacrifice was, that the people should partake of the victim offered. The portion of the victim destined for God was consumed by fire, and as the altar smoked it was transmitted to heaven; the portion destined for the people was taken and eaten by them. All this signified a sort of communion between heaven and earth, between man and God, and the fact of both partaking of the same sacred food showed that the receivers were made one. The victim, therefore, sacrificed was the bond of this double union, first between God and man, secondly between those who partook of the victim.

Let us now pass to the sacrifice of Calvary of which these sacrifices were only types, and I cannot express the doctrine of this union better than to follow the language of Gueranger who says, the simple and hidden unity of the Son of God, by uniting and espousing to Himself the whole nature of man came forth from the Father into this visible many-creatured world of the senses and conforming Himself to this multiplicity without in any way changing His own oneness, uniting our lowliness with His own dignity, uniting our life with His own, uniting us as His members to Himself as our Head, He would

have us all be one with Himself, and thus restoring us to our lost union with God.

On the night before He suffered death, the night before He offered Himself as a victim to His heavenly Father as the representative of mankind, He stretched out His hands and offered as a libation the blood of the grape. This offering is a miraculous anticipation of that offering of Himself which will take place on Calvary a few hours later when His blood will flow for man. "Take ye and eat; this is my Body which shall be delivered for you. Take and drink this chalice which is the new Testament in my Blood. This do ye in commemoration of me." That is: As I am anticipating for your sake, the death that I am to suffer on the morrow, so you do this in commemoration of me, when I am ascended to my Father. By the words of consecration pronounced by the priest the tremendous mysteries are laid on the altar. He shows them veiled under the sacramental species; they are held up to the adoring multitude. The Host was one and now he divides it, he mystically multiplies and distributes unity and thus completes the sacrifice. This divine sacrament, which in its own essence is one, and simple, and indivisible, lovingly multiplies itself under the exterior symbol of the species, in order that returning from the multiplicity of the receivers into the unity which is its own principle it will bring into unity them that received it, and thus is perpetuated the union between God and man which was originated in the mystery of the Incarnation. We are united to God and God

to us, and in this consists the social influence of the Blessed Sacrament. The human family had been broken up by sin; it regains its lost unity by the Blood of the Lamb of God, and the original intention which God had in creating man is fulfilled. Man has regained his lost position in the glorious choir of beings.

The history of the Blessed Eucharist is one with the history of every social phase of the Christian world, for the Eucharist is the vital center, here below, whither everything in the Church converges. It is the inner bond which unites that society of which Christ is the Head, the society whereby He is to rule over nations. From this we see the reason why there is a continual sacrifice. The Cross was the altar of the world, and on that Cross was made an oblation of the whole of human nature, for the whole human race was united with this last act of Infinite Adoration and Reparation offered by its Head to the supreme Majesty of God. The Church then was in its infancy, and the mystery of divine union which Christ came on earth to produce was not to have its immediate realization for each separate member, except by its successive application to each one as his time came. This was the object of the sublime institution of the Blessed Eucharist. It was a new Testament which gave to the future Church the possession of the mystery whereby each generation linked on to its predecessors by the unity of the same sacrifice would find itself in union with the Word Incarnate, and in that union would find the tie which mutually binds its members together.

The first injunction given by Jesus after the last supper was a love of union. "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another, as I have loved you: and by this all men know that ye are my disciples." And this prayer of our Lord was well understood by the Church afterwards, when a few years later it was obliged to pass beyond the limits of Judea and carry her treasures to the Gentiles. It was a world of corruption then, all was discord between man and man, and the only remedy was the tyranny of a Cæsar. It was into such a world the Christians had to preach the new Gospel, and in doing so they showed it, the marvel of a new people, which by the sole influence of its virtues, recruited its members from every class and every clime and was stronger and more united than any other nation upon the earth. The pagans wondered, but the faithful understood the reason, for it was well explained to them by the Apostle, "We being many, are one bread, one body, all partake of one bread."

This sentiment of union was rooted in the soul of the early Church by reason of the Blessed Eucharist. Her mission was to bring about the union of the children of God that were dispersed about the world. When the violence of the persecutors obliged her to provide her children with some secret sign whereby they might recognize each other and not be recognized by her pagan enemies, she gave them the mysterious ICTHUS which means fish, the fish being the sacred symbol of the Blessed Eucharist. The letters which form the Greek word ICTHUS are

the initials of a formula in the same language which gives this sentence, JESUS SON OF GOD SAVIOUR. We find this sacred symbol on almost everything that the Christians of the first three centuries possessed; on rings, on lamps, on implements the fish in some way or other was inscribed. It was the watchword, the tessera of the early Christians in those days of persecution. Hence we see how even the symbol was used by the Christians as a bond of that union which was such a puzzle to the pagan world.

From what I have now said we can see the reason why the Church exacts each member of her flock to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, in order that we may not be separated from the communion of hearts, from that league of affection and love that is the life and soul of Christ's faithful. What a grand and wonderful creation the Blessed Sacrament is. It is the vital center of the Christian world. It is the amplification of His Incarnation. Here He communicates Himself to every human heart and becomes in very truth the vine that bears God's plants, sending the sap of His divine life into all its shoots and branches, causing them to blossom and bear the fruit of eternal life.

BLESSED EUCHARIST

Part III

"Let not your hearts be troubled; I will not leave you desolate. I will come to you."—John 14.

There is a promise that if He would withdraw Himself from them as the Incarnate Word, He would still be with them in some other way, and in a way more expressive and loving, as divine compassion is not retrograde. This promise made by Jesus Christ in such touching words to His Apostles the night before He died for our salvation, is clearly fulfilled in the institution of the Blessed Eucharist. He is with us there and we are no longer orphans, or lonely when we have Jesus Christ as our Guest. He is present in the Holy Eucharist not in sign or symbol, but really; not as the faith of the recipient wishes, but actually, not as an effective grace, but substantially. Behind those walls of accidents, behind these Eucharistic appearances, He is there with His soul, divinity, and humanity as He is in heaven to-day. We are no longer orphans when we have His sacramental presence. The Church being the Bride of Christ has a right to the presence of her Spouse; no transient substitute will satisfy her. She will feel discontent if He is not with her really and substantially.

We have no necessity to look for our God through His attributes; we have Him living with us in His home, the tabernacle, where we all can visit Him. And when we kneel before His sacramental throne we feel that we are in His august presence, for we feel some unseen power entrances us. The sanctuary has a solemnity about it, has an odor of sanctity perfuming the air around it, and a supernatural warmth which dispells the wintry chillness from our hearts, chases levity, and sweetens life. We have no necessity to look for Him in the crib of Bethlehem, for He is born every day upon the altar, produced by the hands of a virgin, and wrapped up in the swaddling clothes of the accidents. We have no necessity to look for Him with His apostles in Judea or Galilee, as He now walks noiselessly with His priests when they carry Him about to be the Viaticum of the soul about to leave for its last long journey. He makes no distinction, He draws no line between the imprisoned, the orphaned, the rich and the poor. The little children who shear the blossoms from the trees, and the flowers from the gardens, to scatter them before Him as He proceeds in those inspiring processions of the Blessed Sacrament remind us of the children who spread palm branches beneath His feet on the occasion of His triumphal entry to Jerusalem. It is with eyes of thought often bleared with tears that we see too often the history of the upper room renewed by so many secret Judases in disguise who with traitorous souls eat at the eucharistic banquet. Golgotha is with us at every sacrifice

of the mass; it is a renewal of the sacrifice of the Cross, not a memorial but a real sacrificial action. Each time we look at the tabernacle with its priceless treasure, its richest pearl, when we see the Victim of love lying there motionless, the radiance of the divinity lighting up the home of love, we are reminded that it is an emblem of His quiet repose in the sepulcher at Jerusalem, and as Christians from all parts of the Christian world visit the scenes of our Lord's sufferings and death to lay a flower of their loving offering at the sepulcher of their Saviour, in like manner the faithful of to-day visit Him in His quiet and peaceful tabernacle to pour out their unctuous prayers in whispering accents and offer to Him the prettiest flower plucked from their garden perfumed with love.

What a cheerful companion to have accompanying us in our earthly pilgrimage. He comforts us in our hours of depression by making them less drearisome. He rejoices with us in our hours of brightness by making them still brighter. The manger of Bethlehem is confined to Bethlehem, and He was there but for a few days listening to the exultant songs of angels, to receive the homage of poor shepherds as well as the adoration of kings. He was in Galilee and Judea for some years healing the wounds of the afflicted. He hung upon the cross for three hours until He completed the sacrifice, but in the Blessed Sacrament He restores to us a perpetual manger, a continual Calvary in our countless altars and tabernacles, verifying the words of the prophet (Mal.

1. 11). No hour passes the clock of our time that is not exultant with acts of our homage, belief, and love; souls are busy in every clime weaving a wreath of many-colored flowers of worship and reparation in atonements for insults offered to Him under the sacramental veil. Acts of faith ascend hourly in such numbers to be sufficient to calm the most troubled sea of blasphemy. The quickened pulse of love throbs so quick and so loud as to silence the wrangling world and force it to join in a hymn of thanksgiving. The presence of our Lord living with us, so near to us, makes the world home-like to us. When we enter a church we look around for the silent glimmer of the sanctuary lamp. It is to us what the polar star is to the mariner; it guides us to the port we seek, and when we find Him, who can read the meaning of the breathless reverence when the ravished heart flutters before the tabernacle and tells itself in prayer. Who can read those sweet communings between that loving soul and its God, which sound more like heavenly echoes than earthly poetry, more like angelic music than the songs of poor mortals. The tabernacle makes the dull day of life gleam with a sunshine from above. The somber silence is only broken by faith's whisperings. The angels of heaven all around in silent adoration listen to the love-making between the lover and the beloved. What comfort, what spiritual riches we receive from Him in His quiet watch-tower, the tabernacle. As the bee rifles the flower of its honey so do fervent souls rifle the home of God of its gifts which He hangs around

it for His visitors. When wrapt up in the fiery folds of faith and deep devotion in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament doubts thaw, temptations are benumbered, and the soul seems to be bathed in a sea of joy. While in His presence a freshness drives away the lassitude of our tired and way-worn souls, and chases self-love as a fog is chased and dispelled before the morning sun.

How cold and shivering a church is without the Blessed Sacrament; all warmth appears to be iced, all fire seems quenched. It is more like an iceberg than a Temple. And what I say of the material Temple I say also of His Church. Whatever riches, whatever light, power, beauty, and grace she has, comes from Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Take the Blessed Sacrament away from the Church and she will be soulless, as our body is when death steals its life away. Christ, therefore, is also with us in His Church, but in a manner quite different from that which He is with us in the Sacrament of the altar. He lives in His Church only morally, spiritually. The Church is a social union, a corporate body, and every properly organized social body has a head, and the unity, strength, and stability of any corporate union depends upon the head. Christ is the head of the Church. In the great mystery of the Incarnation Christ assumed human nature. The whole of human nature was united as its head through the humanity which was formed from the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary. This was the physical Body; but He had another Body also which was called His

mystical Body. This Body we call His Church. And what the head is to the body so is Christ as head to His Church, and as all our dignity and excellence are derived from the head, and through it all our actions are originated, preserved, and sustained, so is it with the Church; its very life, light, and strength are derived from Him as its Head. And although this body of Christ is spiritual and mystical, still its attributes are just as visible as the attributes of His corporal body. As the material body of Christ with all its members are one, so is the mystical or spiritual body of Christ one with all its members. As the body of Christ is indestructible and imperishable, so also is His mystical body indestructible and imperishable. No interior corruption can kill her, no external power can crush her, no more than the material body of Christ could have been subject to internal destruction or triumphed over by any extraneous power on earth. And as holiness, sanctity, were essentially the attributes of the body of Christ by reason of its personal union with the divinity, these, too, are essential characteristics of His mystical body, the Church. Finally as we cannot separate the Holy Ghost from any other one of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity, in like manner is the Holy Spirit inseparable from the mystical body, the church. In this we find the difference between her and the rest of the human race, which is the body of Christ in a much wider sense. She participates in a particular manner in the supernatural life of Christ, while the whole human race participates in a general manner.

The body of Christ has never been without the Holy Ghost, neither does the Church ever suffer the absence of His divine Presence. "I am the vine, you the branches" (John 14. 5). And this is the reason why the Church cannot be crushed. If she had not the Holy Ghost sustaining her, she would crumble to fragments long ago like other institutions that are merely human. When the Church upbraids the world for its sins it shudders, gets angry, and says it will not be lectured. Just as it happened to Jesus Christ when He upbraided the Scribes and Pharisees, and told them that He spoke with the authority of a king, the king of truth. To-day His mystical body continuing to accomplish the redemption of the world pronounces judgment upon the world for its crime, and the world seeks to put her to death as it did to its divine Founder. These are the causes of the battle between the Church and the world. But like our divine Saviour who escaped the fury of His enemies and in the end triumphed, she breaks the fetters which her enemies attempt to bind her with. She breaks through prison doors to give the world her message of truth, for it cannot be fettered or imprisoned. Like her Saviour she is crucified and yet liveth. When we look at the life of this mystical body of Christ, His Church, on its way through time, and see her bright form surrounded by her dark enemies who assail her with their coarse blasphemies of wicked philosophy, corrupt civilization, and debased diplomacy, we are forced to see in it a reflex of our Lord on His way to Calvary when He was

surrounded by a coarse rabble and frenzied mob who shouted their curses and blasphemies from every point of vantage. Each day of her life brings new enemies; at one time it is some new science which boasts in attempting to show that the gospel is no longer a truth but a legend; at another time it is some new theory about morality which attempts to show that it is nothing more than a smack of the lips. In one country it may be a heresy babbling piety and philanthropy like the Pharisees in order that it may get a hit at Jesus through His Church; in another it may be a nation seeking a friendly kiss with the Church but the kiss is the kiss of Judas, as Father Faber beautifully expresses it. "She lives with such an alliance, as the timid deer lives in the forest whose every echo is ringing with the hunter's horn. She is less at ease in a concordat than in a catacomb." There is no peace for her, at every step there is an ambuscade and there lies the lurking assassin. But the rapier of the assassin can never reach her heart. Why? Her body is the mystical body of Christ, and her enemies are only stabbing the air when they attempt to wound or kill her. The weapon recoils and pierces through the would-be assassin. This we see verified in every persecutor of Christ whether it be a person or a theory; we see it particularly true in every heresy that rebelled against her teaching. Year after year heresy shed its Christian elements; the kernel has been corrupted and nought remains but a mere infidel shell.

All God's works are disclosures of Himself.

When we look at this stupendous universe, the sidereal world and the earth, we are reminded of the power of God; and when we consider that all-ruling providence governing these elements we are reminded of the goodness of God; when we revisit the humble manger of Bethlehem we are confronted with the mercy of God; when the wings of faith carry us to heaven we see the perfection of the works of God; when we look down into the abysses of hell it speaks to us of the justice of God, as purgatory is eloquent of His compassion: all these works are so many mirrors which reflect His invisible perfections and hidden beauty. But when we come to look for an example of the mirror of God's love, we are submerged in a very sea of mirrors so deep and profound that it is to us fathomless. If the tremulous leaves of the olive trees and dust of Mount Olivet could speak, if the bloody scourge and blunted nails could give utterance to their thoughts, if the sharp lance, the sharp crown of thorns, the crimson cross could preach to us of the divine attribute of God's love for us, they would be far in a way less expressive in their language of the exuberance and prodigality of His love for us by instituting the Blessed Sacrament. We must not be surprised then when poets sing songs of His praise there; when art in all its forms and magnificence is exhausted to seek designs for the tabernacle of this Mystical Rose; when the treasures of the earth are searched for precious stones and gems, and the sunless chasms of the deep are fished for pearls to beautify His cup. The tabernacle is a

great light, and the brighter that light shines on us by the growing intensity of our faith, the deeper the darkness of the world becomes. At the tabernacle we can drink to inebriation from the living fountain of love, while our souls are hushed with awe in His presence.

HAIL MARY

"Hear ye, therefore, O house of David, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and his name shall be called Emmanuel."— ISAIAS 7. 14.

The only begotten Son of the Most High came on earth garbed in the livery of misery, meekness and humility, which show Him to be man. Through this misery, meekness and humility are interwoven luminous threads of Majesty, glory and greatness that reveal His Divinity. Although the Scriptural narrative of His coming by the Evangelist, St. Luke, is the simplicity of language, nevertheless, it has all the signs of divine inspiration. Every phrase is important, every circumstance is an argument, every word a truth. There is no tinsel, no gilding, no rhetorical ornamentation about it, nevertheless with a wonderful artifice and harmony it demonstrates the fulfillment of the prophecy. "And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary." The Evangelist did not take into account the reigning time of Cæsar, but fixed the time of the coming from heaven of this bright ambassador, on the sixth month from the conception of St. John the Baptist. It is not the mighty

ones of the earth that reckon with God, but he who has the riches of virtue. Neither was it without some significance that the Evangelist mentions the place where the angel Gabriel came. Nazareth means sanctified, separated, flowery. On this day the true Nazarene, the Holy of Holies, separated from all sinners, in this soil of Nazareth springs up as a flower from the root of Jesse.

Mary was the nearest creature to angelic that was possible, for an angel and a virgin form the truest image, the most brilliant mirror, the ineffable reflex of the purity and perfection of God. The Virgin Mother is the noblest creature created by God. Her tender grace, her dignity, her purity, embalm our faith with a fragrance that no saint on the calendar approaches or can approach. She is a flower transplanted from the garden of heaven to that of earth that she may transform the putrescence of a putrid world into the sweetness of virtue. The perfume from the lily of Mary's purity rising like clouds of incense above earthly spheres, penetrated through the myriads of angelic hosts, and reached the throne of God and called the Word upon the earth; it drew the sanctuary of a heart divinely pure to rest within herself. She is a virgin and about to become a mother, but her maternity instead of abstracting anything from her virginity adds more fragrance to it.

The angel sent by God ignored rich Jerusalem, proud Rome, the kingdom of Herod, the palace of Augustus. Queen and empress all were passed by. The little village of Nazareth; the humble house of

Joseph, a poor artisan, was the terminus of his visit; an unrecognized little girl is what the angel sought to become the mother of the Messiah. In the whole universe he did not find a place more fitting, a person more becoming, more worthy of his errand. And why? What are the claims of this little maid of Nazareth that entitle her above all other little maids to receive such a distinguished host as an archangel from heaven? Her virginity. Virginity is the symbol of purity, of grace, of love. This maid was the perfection of virginity. Virgin in soul and body, in mind and heart. The model virgin for all other virgins. The virgin by excellence. The virgin known in the Scripture, familiar among the traditions of the people, and the expectation of nations.

The name of this maid is Mary, and Mary means Lady. Mary is called "Our Lady" in the same sense that we call her Son Jesus Christ, "Our Lord." The limits of her empire are those of her Son. Those of her being of grace, while His are by nature. Her empire is that of mercy, her judgment is clemency, her scepter is sweetness, her jeweled crown is love.

What grand characters form the *dramatis personæ* of this first act in the great drama of man's redemption. An archangel from the angelic hosts, a virgin the purest, the humblest, the holiest. And this bright-souled angel poised in the ambient air, like a white eagle looking on its prey, opens the first brilliant scene of the greatest of tragedies, by conveying to Mary, the virgin, a message from God. "Hail, full of grace." There is no room for aught else in the

soul of the virgin but beauteous grace. A creature in whom all graces, all the privileges, all the virtues that reside in Jesus Christ, and in the angels and saints as in divided rivulets, are found in her all reunited as in a river when near its spring. There is no room here for sin, I should say, no stain, no blotch, no scar that would record the existence of a wound inflicted by sin. Prepared by His wisdom, molded by His own hand, adopted to be His closest associate during His life on earth. No earthly queen ever wore a crown of jewels so precious, so lustrous, no hero of the world had his brow wreathed with a garland commemorative of valorous deeds so glorious as what those simple words of the virgin's chaplet signify, "Full of grace."

She could not be otherwise but full of grace, for, "the Lord is with thee," said the visiting angel. What an honor conferred on her. What a guest to entertain. What a companion to be associated with, the Eternal God. Although God, through His immensity and efficacy is with all creatures; and is often with sinners when actual grace illumines their minds and moves their hearts; and is with the just through sanctifying grace; and in a special way is with the elect; in Mary, however, God is with her not alone in all these ways, but also in a most particular and ineffable way, in a more noble and intimate way.

The angel does not stop here in declaring the greatness and glory of Mary, but tells her that "she is blessed among women." A Queen among women, the glory of women, a model woman. How else

could she be but blessed, when she is the nearest thing to an angel; how else could she be but blessed when she was conceived without sin, the hereditary satanic power in her case was suspended; how else could she be but blessed when she is full of grace; how else could she be but blessed when the Lord is not only with her, but the fruit of her womb is the Holy of Holies; how else could she be but blessed when she sipped at the fountain of all graces, and partook of the viands, the sweetmeats catered by the Provider of all things?

Mary was startled at the angel's salutation; she was disturbed for she could not understand how a lowly humble maid like her could be the recipient of such heavenly favors. But the explanation was forthcoming from the angel who noticed her perturbation. "Fear not, Mary," he said, "for thou hast found grace with God." You have not sought else but to please God, and He in return shows His preference for thee to all the saints who have preceded thee; by consecrating thyself to God thou hast purchased the richest of all treasures, the most precious of pearls, the divine maternity. "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son; and thou shalt call Him Jesus." Yes, thou shalt conceive a son. The son of Mary, therefore, is true man, is truly the son of man, because a son that is conceived is a true son, and a son that is truly conceived by woman is true man. This declaration, therefore, on the part of the angel confutes the Manichean heresy which taught that Jesus Christ had not true and real flesh.

The angel also added, not alone shalt thou conceive, but expressedly defines the place where the conception takes place, namely in her womb. From her own flesh, from her own blood, from her own substance, thereby confuting the heresy of Valentine which taught that the humanity of Christ descended from heaven, and that Mary was only the channel through whom it came. The angel goes still further. Not alone, O Virgin, will you conceive, and from thy own substance, but you will give Him birth, manifestly indicating that the word virgin must be interpreted with an undivided meaning, and not in a divided sense, which means, as a virgin you conceived, as a virgin you brought a son, and will remain a virgin. Behold, therefore, is the perpetual virginity of Mary established, a virgin before the birth, a virgin in the birth, a virgin after birth, and thus refuting the teaching of Calvin. The angel proceeding said, "And He that shall be born of thee will be called the son of the Most High," which puts to flight the heresy of Nestorius who denied the divine maternity. Therefore, although Mary has not generated the divine person, but only the flesh of Jesus Christ, nevertheless as in Jesus Christ man and God are only one Person, one *suppositum,* substantial, and indissoluble, one and the same Jesus Christ; thus Mary the true mother of man is also the mother of God, who to man is intimately united. In the same way as we say of every father, although he may not have generated the soul but only the body of his own son, nevertheless he is the father not alone of the body,

but also of the soul in conjunction with the body which forms with the soul one *compositum,* one man.

Mary became more disturbed as the salutation of the angel became more unintelligible to her. It was her turn now to speak. "How shall this be, because I know not man?" Joseph is my legitimate spouse, he is the guardian of my virginity and not its ravisher. I have consecrated my body and soul to my heavenly spouse; I have locked up that vow within the impenetrable walls of my soul, sealed the door with the seal of a resolute will, and I will not break that seal. My God holds the key. These are the accents that welled forth from a soul enamored with chastity, a soul surcharged with virginity. O virginity, what more noble victim was ever offered on thy altar. From the one part the glory of becoming the mother of God is presented to the mind of Mary, and from the other part the sacrifice of a virtue dear to her heart; yet without the slightest hesitation she prefers the grace that sanctifies her, to the grace that would exalt her. She prefers perfection to sublimity, she refuses the dignity of being His mother to the sacrifice of not being His spouse. She does not vacillate one moment in the face of the highest dignity that could be conferred on woman.

Little indeed did Mary know that all these graces which ornamented her soul were a preparation for the august mystery of the Incarnation. Little did she know that her lilies interwoven with those of St. Joseph formed a wreath of virginity from which would grow the sweet flower of Nazareth. If there

be anything that could nobilify the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem it would be the virginity of Mary, and if there be anything that could nobilify Mary it would be her divine maternity. What therefore is the proceeding of the coming Saviour? He looks out for a poor, humble, chaste mother that Sion was ashamed to number among her daughters. He selects a place so unknown that Judea blushed to name it among its cities. He wished that all His surroundings should be poor, in order that the conversion of the world hereafter may become more manifest as the work of the power of God and not that of man. What matter does it make then if the home of Joseph and Mary be humble when sanctity reigns there? What matter is it if Mary be poor, neglected, unclothed with any of the world's tinselled trimmings, when she is robed with the white stole of purity? By means of the sanctity reigning in Joseph's house, and the spotless virginity in Mary's soul, the Word of God prepared a dwelling place, *de congruo,* worthy of Himself. This little dwelling is as rich and as beautiful as heaven. In descending to this home, imprisoning Himself in this womb, His Majesty fears no treason, His glory dreads no dimness; and while the infirmity of the flesh to which He unites Himself profoundly humiliates Him, it at the same time announces Him as Saviour, and the sanctity which surrounds Him manifests Him as God.

How can this be? "I know not man." The angel trembled in the tremulous air, as Mary pronounced these words. Was His mission to be futile? Was he

to return to his Royal King and say, "I have failed?" Was the envoy from heaven, upon whom so much depended, to be foiled by a little girl scarcely known in Nazareth? Were all the prophecies of old which predicted so vividly the birth of the Messiah to be falsified? Was the hour of man's redemption to be deferred *sine die?* Were the longings, the watchings, the buoyant expectancies of Limbo's prisoners to be deceived? Were the rejoicings of heaven to be changed into a mourning dirge? Was the tide of joy heard on every human shore to retire into the depths of time with no hope of a defined return? Were all these to be baffled by the steadfast will of the virgin maid of Nazareth? No, the words of Mary, "How shall this be, for I know not man," afforded the angel an opportunity of revealing to her the way in which the ineffable mystery would take place without breaking the seal of her virginity. "By the action of the Holy Ghost and the power of the Most High he that shall be born of thee shall be the Son of God." As the omnipotence of God made thy cousin Elizabeth fruitful although she was by nature sterile, in like manner will He make thee fecund who art sterile by virtue. Having explained Mary's difficulty the angel was silent, and Mary wrapt up in ecstasy considering the divine greatness, the infinite condescension, her own nothingness, the far-reaching effects of her consent, at last burst forth in words that will be remembered when the grave of time will close over all that is mortal, words that will remain engraven on the tablet of eternity. "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord, be

it done unto me according to thy word." What sublime words, another *fiat* pronounced, but a greater *fiat* than that pronounced by the Creator on the threshold of creation when He drew the world out of nothing, for Mary's *fiat* brought the Infinite God into nothing. In these words of Mary the angel received her consent to become the mother of man's Saviour. She selected to be the great co-operatrix in the redemption of lost man. With this consoling message of conquest the angel returned to the kingdom of the God-head. The joy-bells of heaven rang out their tuneful peals, and Limbo's breathless expectancy was changed into loud pæans of rejoicing. The gates of heaven opened and the plenitude of the Holy Trinity poured out in full tide and Mary conceived. The Immaculate Maiden was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, and the Sacred Body of Christ was instantly formed from her pure blood, and the virgin was more incomparably virgin than before. "The stars, unconscious of what took place in the home of Nazareth, sped through space as usual, and the lily was closed in its vase, and the watch-dogs of the herdsmen of Nazareth broke ever and anon the stillness of the night, while the awful mystery was being accomplished. Morning rose on earth cold, clear, vernal; and the long-expected Redeemer of mankind came, and no one but the mother knew." The divine Word without leaving the divine Mind, which generated it, becomes flesh; just as the internal word, the thought of man, becomes apparent in words without leaving the mind that conceives it. Underneath the human wrap-

page of flesh lay hidden the Divinity in all its omnipotence. While the Son of God was the Virgin's tenant He was still the divine Lord and Master. Infinity was imprisoned within finite human walls. He put on the prison garments of humanity by which we recognize Him to be the Son of Mary, but beneath those garments the person of the Royal King is disguised by which we recognize Him to be the Son of God. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us."

How sublime in its humility, how great in its simplicity is the history of this wonderful mystery. What harmonies it reveals; what prophecies it fulfills; what virtues it commends. If man were able to invent it he would also be able to work it, but as it took an infinite power to accomplish it, it behooved infinite wisdom to idealize it. Reason does not invent that which is above reason; that which reason does not understand, reason does not intend. Man repeats the thoughts, the designs, the operations of man. God alone reveals the designs, the thoughts, the works of His wisdom and love. Reason could not, therefore, invent the consoling dogma of God becoming man; but it received it, believed in it after it was made manifest by the same God who had accomplished it, and left it in His Church where He maintains it and perpetuates it through proofs, through faith, hope, and love.

O sublime mystery of God-made man. We have absolute need of thee. If these words be separated, we fall back into the depths of despair. Our infinite

misery has need of God, but our timidity, our nothingness do not dare to allow us to approach even an angel. A man that is not God, cannot save us, cannot succor us, cannot satisfy us, and a God that is not man does not sustain us, does not encourage us, does not assure us. Therefore, we have neither salvation, nor confidence, nor hope, unless in a man-God. Whoever attempts to weaken our faith in this great truth is as cruel to us as he is impious before God. Receive from us, O precious mystery, the entire homage of our mind and heart. We believe in thee, we love thee. Rather let us say, We believe while loving Thee, and love while believing in Thee. Thus love is our faith, and faith is our love. With all that we have, with all that we are, we desire to consecrate, to immolate ourselves to Thee; and you, O Mary, Virgin Mother, you who cradled the sufferings of the Infant Jesus through His flight to Egypt and in the Nazareth home; you who stood at the foot of the Cross and received thy commission to perpetuate thy Son's great work in rejuvenating the withered souls of wicked men, and building up anew the spiritual framework of wrecked souls. Oh, cradle our souls, guard them from wrong-doings, rejuvenate them with the refreshing graces from the fountain of redemption.

There is the socialism of Christ, and there is the socialism of the devil. The socialism of Christ is what His Church teaches, and the socialism of the devil is what Karl Marx, Herzen, and Proudhon teach. The socialism of Christ's Church is to love one another, and do unto others what you would have others do unto you. The socialism of the devil, Karl Marx and Co., is to wage war against all prevailing ideas about religion, state, country, and patriotism. The idea of God is, they say, the keystone of a perverted civilization, and it is necessary to sweep it away from the face of the earth. Church, Providence, Immortality of the soul, State, family, good, evil are to be done away with. The earthly religion to be the religion of man. Society, therefore, according to these is to be without any rule.

The sectaries of socialism teach the withholding of obedience to the heads of States, in whom the rights of authority are bestowed by God Himself. For they assert that all men are equal, and hence they contend that neither honor nor respect is due to public authority, nor any obedience to the laws, except to those sanctioned according to their own pleasure.

They attack the right of property, sanctioned by the law of nature, and strain every effort to seize and

hold in common all that is individually acquired by title of lawful inheritance, through intellectual, or manual labor, or economy of living.

They hold in scorn the natural union between man and woman which is held sacred even among barbarous nations, and slacken its bond whereby family life is chiefly maintained.

Socialism arrogates to itself complete sovereignty and an absolute independence in solving all questions relative to the political and social orders. It denies revelation because revelation contradicts the total efficiency of reason; it denies grace because grace contradicts its absolute independence; it denies Providence because Providence is the contradiction of its independent sovereignty. All these negations linked together deny the union between God and man; and what it does with God in religion, it does with God in the political order, between the governed and the governing, and while it does this, it looks for an equilibrium which it never can find, because it destroys the nature between God and man.

The fundamental error of socialism as a theory taught in socialistic schools is that it denies sin. The deductions drawn from this negation are mischievous. First, it destroys human liberty which cannot be conceived unless we admit sin. Secondly, if liberty be denied then man has no responsibility. Thirdly, if there be no responsibility there is no penalty. Fourthly, if there be no penalty there is no such thing as divine and human government. Finally, if there be no individual responsibility there can be no re-

sponsibility in the species, and therefore according to socialists there is no human responsibility, there is no social, political, or domestic responsibility. These are the consequences of such pernicious doctrine, and when publicly declared there is the danger of the democracy flowing on until it gets lost in socialism as a river gets lost in the sea. And as Pope Leo says, "It leaves nothing scathless and uninjured of that which human and divine laws alike have wisely ordained to ensure the preservation and honor of life. These monstrous views they proclaim in public meetings, uphold in booklets, and spread broadcast everywhere through the daily press."

What are the reasons that have actuated socialists to adopt this creed and preach it so vehemently? The greater part of socialists maintain that there is no other evil but what is in society, in political, religious, and social institutions, and therefore all these institutions should be leveled to the ground.

They maintain furthermore that supreme good consists in the disarrangement of the social region, and that intrinsic good is in man, and therefore it is the duty of man to bring about this disarrangement.

What is the object of socialism destroying all these social institutions? The reason is, because they oppress the passions. The passions are, they say, of divine institution; virtues are of human institution; virtues, they say are pernicious, and passions are salutary. For this reason the supreme end of socialism is to create a new atmosphere in which the pas-

sions may move more freely, and when this is accomplished, they promise us the golden age of the world. Socialism is, therefore, retrograde, it puts back the hands of the clock to the days of paganism.

When socialists say that evil is in society and not in man, and that it falls to man to redeem society, they build their theory on a false basis, because evil is in man as well as in society. Society is the reunion of a multitude of men, who live under the rule and the protection of the same law and the same institutions, and does not exist independently of the individuals who constitute it; there can be nothing in society which is not previously in the individuals, whence it follows, that the evil and the good which are in it, come from man. Considered from this point of view, the evil that is in society cannot be extirpated from it without touching the individuals in whom it was originally and essentially.

The evil which is in society is there essentially or accidentally. If essentially, to extirpate it, society itself must be destroyed, the upsetting of institutions is not sufficient. If it is there accidentally, from whence has it come, what was the cause of its coming, and how is man to redeem society? From whom does he get the power to redeem it? The Church of Christ alone can supply the solution of this problem when it says, man is human and executes things human, God is divine and executes things divine. The redemption of man does not come within the province of human things, therefore man cannot be his own redeemer. Socialism is therefore wrong when it

gives an undertaking to man to accomplish which belongs to God.

What is it that has forced these doctrines upon the minds of men? I believe it to be the erroneous conception of the distribution of property. And this appeals to the masses with marvelous success. Survey the world of to-day and we are confronted on the one side with a senseless and unjust economy, gold and glitter, and on the other side with poverty, hunger and rags. One struggling to live against indigestion, and the other eking out an existence for want of food to digest. One side dizzy from the effect of too much eating and drinking, the other stupid, pinched, and bent for something to eat. All over the world we see a feverish unrest to pile up wealth on one side and on the other hand poverty was never so stark and grinding. In our large cities these extremes meet. Streets, squares, boulevards, are studded with gorgeous homes to sweeten life, then there is the Ghetto, a pile of buildings unfit for cattle much less human beings to dwell in. Families are there huddled together in stifling rooms, nurseries of sin and vermin, where children squat about with shriveled brows and pinched faces showing life hastening on to decrepitude; God's little children rotten before they are ripe. And the terrible element is that material progress aggravates both extremes, for the more sweat that falls from the brow of labor the more dollars go into the coffers of the rich. While the pile of the rich is being doubled the wages of the laborer are cut down and the number of the poor is increased. Society

is rushing to a deep chasm at express speed. Listen to the chorus of cries, sobs, and maledictions of slaves hewing marble for the palaces of their tyrants, of serfs raking the soil to extract from it a piece of bread, of working men blasting granite rocks in the mountains to make roads to centers of industry, of miners passing half their lives in the bowels of the earth, of men rushed to battle to slay their fellow man and torture and kill their colleagues to make millionaires billionaires; there bursts forth from all these human breasts a cry of lamentation. No doubt the triumphal car of progress moves on, but its wheels are blood-stained. Read the hearts of the masses expressed on their banners as they march Sunday after Sunday in London to express their feelings in Trafalgar Square. The vibrant note of the warning bell is there. On one banner carried by the strong hands of labor we read: "Democracy is the power of to-day." On another we see these words: "Democracy seeks economic salvation." On a third we read: "The relation between capital and labor is wholly unsatisfactory." Then comes a large white banner carried by women on which stand out in letters of fiery red: "We want bread for our children." What is the cause of all this social unrest? The lust for money for the few, to uphold the pride and the luxury of the few, and to grab this, the masses must sweat and eke out an existence in ill health and misery. This state of things has to be righted, otherwise the hoarse grumble of discontent heard now, like the low murmur of the brook, will burst forth some day into

the roar of a rushing torrent and sweep all before it, as has occurred in those lurid days of the French revolution.

What is to be done to remedy this crying evil? Are we to go about preaching platitudes and patience? So much would be so much sound and fury, and sound and fury won't procure bread for the hungry, nor garments for the shivering. We must be more practical. Organize helping committees, establish institutions; pulpit and platform must ring with words of fire to denounce the "proud man's contumely, the oppressors wrong." The language of the Catholic Church is not to throw fringes of purple and gold over the sins of unjust opulency, but to lay bare its crime. Christ never meant His Church to be the buttress of mammon. Are men to go to church to hear a gospel of dollars vehemently harangued every Sunday? If this is to be the gospel, the bells in the church tower would soon cease ringing out their musical notes, and the benches would soon become empty of worshipers.

When the Catholic Church says we are all brothers equal and free, it explains how we are so. Equality amongst men consists in this, that one and all possessing the same nature, are called to the sublime dignity of being sons of God, and, moreover, that one and the same end being set before all, each and every one has to be judged according to the same laws, and to have punishment and rewards meted out according to individual deserts. There is, however, an inequality of right and authority which emanates

from the Author of Nature Himself. As regards rulers and subjects, all, without exception, are mutually bound by duties and rights, in such a manner that in the one hand moderation is enjoined in the appetite for power, and on the other obedience is shown to be easy, stable, and honorable. The Church urges on all the Apostolic precept. There is no power but that which comes from God, and those that are ordained of God. Therefore, he that resisteth the powers, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist purchase to themselves damnation. But it has a word for the powerful and opulent, too; it warns them not to abuse the power given to them by God to the detriment of the subject. Should they abuse that power God will call them to a strict and speedy account. She addresses them in the words of divine Wisdom. "Give ear you who rule the people and that please yourselves in the multitude of nations, power is given to you by the Lord and strength by the Most High, who will examine your works and search your thoughts, for a most severe judgment shall be for them that rule. For God will not accept any man's person, nor will He stand in awe of any one's greatness; for He hath the little and the great, and He hath equally care of all. But a greater punishment is ready for the more mighty."

The history of the Catholic Church reveals to us that the cares of her sacred ministry were not exclusively confined to the cultivation of the heart and mind, but by establishing charitable institutions, hospitals, orphanages, asylums, industrial schools, she

cast her ægis of protecting care around the weak and lowly. Her proudest boast was to bring down the insolence of the proud, and defrauding the laborer of his wages is one of the crimes her theology teaches that cry to heaven for vengeance. Among the great truths of the Christian doctrine, that of the obligations of the rich to the poor, the Catholic Church has persistently proclaimed from the house-tops. I do not mean to claim for her a complete monopoly in this sacred duty, but it must be said of her that environment was not powerful enough to cramp the character of her chiefs like Leo and Pius, and other dignitaries of her rank and file who, brushing aside the pomps of office and cramping narrowness, have declared and put into practice the teaching of Christ in defense of the poor rather than the shriveled husk that is often taken for true religion. And when the Church awakens to her duty in this respect, then there will be less rags, better food, more virtue, brighter homes, and no longer will youth be hastened to decrepitude and premature graves.

Religion is based on an all-pervading, all-embracing spirit of love. It should be woven through the web and woof of society in its daily life. It is the life-giving blood of the masses and the privileged few; it must go down to the roots and not remain perched on the uppermost branch. Although it breathes love for all and speaks the language of love to all, yet its language alters according to the character of the child of its soul. To the poor its accents are full of tenderness, but for the rich they are full of warning. Re-

ligion is not to be appropriated by any one day of the week, it is for all the days of the week, and lays down the all-enduring foundation upon which the economic, social, and political fabric should be built. Religion is for the military man bivouacked in his camp as well as for the religious in his cell; it is for the commercial man in his department store as well as for the clerk at his desk; it is for the scientist in his laboratory as well as for the student in his primary studies; it is for the mechanic in his workshop, the girl in the factory, the priest in the sanctuary. But it is emphatically for the rich. It rails at the unjust and immoral means by which wealth is amassed, and counsels the wealthy to be animated by a noble and unselfish spirit of fraternal love for the poor and not to pass them by like the Levite in the gospel, but to stoop down and anoint their galling wounds. This is the religion of Jesus Christ and that which He commissioned all of us to practice and preach.

We are all brothers and under no tunic should feelings be more kindly and loving than those under the cassock of Christ's Church. "Every minister," says Leo XIII, "of religion must throw into the conflict all the energy of his mind, and all the strength of his endurance. They must never cease to urge upon all men of every class, upon the high as well as upon the lowly, the gospel doctrine of Christian life. By every means in their power they must, under the guidance of charity and justice, strive to secure the rights, to promote the good, and to work for not merely the spiritual but also for the temporal eleva-

tion of the people." Class bias and smug advice will not warm shivering indigence. Misery has to be unmasked and the sores that give pain exposed. They have to be probed and the primary causes of their rottenness seen, and having discovered the root of the social evil an effective remedy must be applied. If Church and State would only brush aside cramped bigotry and join hands for the betterment of the masses, then we would have the golden age of the world. There is to be no shrugging of shoulders at this social problem. It is the duty of Church and State to grapple with it, each in that way which comes within its province. Both should labor to attain the same end although to reach there the ways may be different. We are too fond of carping about words. If a voice is heard advocating the cause of the poor, someone will cry out: "Oh, he is a socialist." Well, if socialism means to devise a plan that will better our fellow men, by giving more wholesome food to the masses who help to produce it; if socialism means to put a warmer coat on the shivering poor who help to weave it, and give to the wearied laborer a more cheerful habitation to live in than the sepulchral hovels in which he now lives in, then the Catholic Church is a rank socialist, and socialism as a scheme of brotherhood is the outcome of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

What is property? It is wealth given to you as a trust. What is ability but mental riches given to you by God to use as a trust? What is life but existence lent to you by God to use for the benefit for self and

brotherhood? This is the teaching of Christ and true socialism, and not the socialism of Karl Marx. Yet there are some who howl at us when we proclaim this doctrine and say that we are avowedly atheistic, and contemplating the destruction of the home, and the degradation of married life. It is impolitic to stand by with folded arms and hear said: "It is only natural, equitable, and inevitable that there should be millionaires and there should be poor, and to meddle with this existing condition of things would be impious and inexpedient. It is the result of progress and civilization that machinery should replace man and that man should suffer in consequence. Man is the appanage of the machine, and as machinery becomes more effective the lot of man must be more precarious and wretched." These are the out-pouring of a delirious debauch. We admit there must be inequality, that there must be rich and poor owing to the disorder caused through our fallen state, but this inequality in the possession of God's bounteous gifts does not exonerate us from the responsibility of relieving the distressed, but on the contrary obligates us to aid the poor from our superabundance. The introduction of mechanical appliances to produce the world's wares quicker and better is the product of man's inventive genius, and the benefit resulting from such should not be confined to the few but to the many. It would be monstrously unjust to maintain the contrary, and to refrain from vigorously denouncing such ideals is to share in the responsibility of such unsound doctrine.

What is wealth? Some defined it "As the possession of the valuable by the valiant." But it has been pointed out that men are not wealthier than the locks on their own strong boxes are. The wealth of a nation consists in strong men, clean men, men of a tender and loving spirit. These are true wealth, and these alone can make a nation great. The prosperity of a nation is founded on pure domestic life, on commercial integrity, high standard of moral worth and public spirit, in simple habits, uprightness, and a soundness and moderation of judgment which springs from character as well as from intellect. It is here where the Church of Christ comes in with its powerful aid to build up a nation. The gospel of Jesus Christ is for the building up of man, and against everything that hurts him. It fights against that damnable lust of mammon, the god of the rich glutton, and stands by the side of Lazarus the poor. It thunders against every system of money making that robs the working man of the just need of his toil. What wages can replace a wasted body, a shortened life, a gruesome grave? If man to-day acted up to the gospel of Jesus Christ there would be no crushing or grinding of the poor, but the very fact of there being such mills is a proof that the gospel of Jesus Christ is ignored and the gospel of mammon takes its place. Anathema therefore to the system which counts of the health of manhood, the health of nationhood, of less importance than dividends. You will have no dividends if you paralyze the brawny arm, the tough muscle, and the bone-like sinew of the laborer by a wage that barely

supports life, much less to strengthen it. Anathema to the system that pushes philanthropy and manhood into the corner, and says that civilization consists only in the building of bridges, piercing of mountains, cutting canals, building dreadnoughts, encircling continents and spanning oceans with electrical appliances for the purpose of piling dollars on the altar of mammon.

It is sad in the extreme and painful to the eyes of faith to see how many schemes are devised, what humiliations are suffered, what degrading acts are committed, what sacrifices are made, to obtain the patronage of the great ones of the world; while almost nothing is done to earn the patronage of the king of heaven.

In order, therefore, that we should guard against this insane hunger, this maddened thirst for worldly advantages and neglect those of heaven, the Son of God in language compassionate and tender but threatening and severe, addressed the Jewish priests, and through them, all of us these grave words: "Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings." Convert into capital and merit of heavenly riches the riches of the earth which are more or less the productive agencies of iniquity. Pour into the lap of the poor your superabundance that they may become your friends with God and at death introduce you into everlasting tabernacles.

There is implanted in our nature a responsive chord of sympathy for the sufferings of our fellow

creatures. Sometimes, however, we find men in whose souls this noble human distinction is alien, as we see exemplified in the Jewish priesthood. In the days of our Saviour the priests of the synagogue were as hard-hearted towards their fellow men as they were indulgent to themselves; their pride and avarice forbade them to be merciful to the penitent and charitable to the poor. When therefore our Lord laid bare their unmercifulness by exhorting them to exercise mercy toward penitent sinners by the beautiful parable of the prodigal son, He introduced the parable of the unjust steward, and by it, and for their instruction, He inculcated charity towards the poor. But, being of an avaricious mind and hearing our Lord expounding His doctrine of using the riches of the earth for the benefit of the poor, they derided Him. The Saviour then acting as Judge in severe and expressive language narrated to them the history of the rich glutton and Lazarus, the poor beggar, which demonstrates the severe condemnation reserved for the rich who disregard the precept of charity to the indigent; and that the giving of alms is not a work of supererogation, but a rigorous duty, an obligation imposed on those who possess God's bounteous gifts to assist those who do not possess them.

There was in the city of Jerusalem, said our Saviour, a rich man who devoted his riches to no other purpose but dress and feast sumptuously. At the gates of his palace lay a poor beggar named Lazarus wretchedly clad, emaciated with starvation and covered from head to foot with ulcerous sores.

Deprived of every remedy in his infirmity, of every solace in his suffering, of every sustenance in his hunger, with a weak and tremulous voice, he stood day after day at the door of the rich man's palace questing the crumbs that fell from his sumptuous table; and, what is almost incredible to say, even this small pittance that is not denied to the brute beast, was sought in vain by Lazarus. Around this mansion, as we often see, well-groomed and well-fed dogs loitered, these dogs more charitable than their master, surrounded poor Lazarus and commenced to lick the sores that covered his body, compensating by their action the cruel abandonment of his fellow man.

But do you think that God has forgotten Lazarus, and that He, the Creator of both the rich and the poor, is interested alone in providing the wealthy with the luxuries of life and neglects the poor and needy, and that they have no place in His love and providence? It is not so. We must not think that God is indifferent to the insulting triumphs of those whom the wheel of fortune lifts up, or to the groans of those whom it crushes beneath it. Lazarus and his fellow-creatures in distress and poverty are dear to God, are loved by God. It is the decree of Divine Providence that an obligation rests upon the rich to assist the poor from their superabundance. This is a necessary consequence from the designs of Divine Providence established by the Creator. God could have distributed His bounteous gifts so as to make each one independent, but then while independent of

each other there would no longer be union, no longer a family, no longer a society. What then has the Creator done? He has decreed that men should receive His gifts through ministration, through other men. He laid down a relationship between the strong and the weak, between authority and subjection, between obedience and command, between the necessity of receiving and the obligation of giving. He bound these opposing factors together by an indissoluble bond, the terms of which human forces may alter, but never can destroy or suspend. As men are therefore born through their parents, and through the priesthood are sanctified, and through the sovereign power are governed, and through the magisterial department are judged, and through the learned are instructed, thus through the rich are they succored. As, therefore, parents are the ministers of God's paternity, the priesthood the ministers of God's grace, sovereignty the minister of God's authority, the magistracy the minister of God's justice, the learned the minister of God's wisdom, in like manner are the rich the ministers of God's providence and bounty. "For he is God's minister to thee, for good," says St. Paul (Rom. 13). That is, for the advantage of our fellow man. In these words consist the great difference between the social doctrine of paganism and that of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. According to the horrible doctrines of paganism, which deified strength to the detriment of the weak, greatness, distinction, and superiority were looked upon as alone for the advantage of those who possessed them; but

according to the sublime maxims of the Gospel, which elevate the weak, greatness, distinction, and superiority are ordained by God for the benefit of those upon whom they are exercised. As the parents, therefore, are for the good of the children, as the priesthood is for the good of the lay element, as sovereignty is for the good of the subject, as the magistracy is for the good of the innocent, as the learned are for the good of the ignorant, as the strong are for the good of the weak, so do the rich exist for the relief, the succor, and the good of the poor.

Would to God that I could indelibly burn this teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the hearts of those who are in the possession of the wealth and the luxuries of the world, and who abuse and squander the bounteous gifts of God to pamper their lower passions; and who are likened to those parasitical plants that fatten on the sap of other plants without bearing any fruit of themselves; who are, in other words, the true picture of the rich glutton of the gospel. The rich man should be nought other but the father, the guardian, the consoler of the poor, the visible image of the divine goodness, the minister of heaven's abundance to human indigence.

I am not speaking now of wealth acquired through turpitude, through chicanery, through corrupt practices, through dishonest trafficking; these cannot be given to the poor as charity. But I speak of wealth honestly acquired, wealth that injustice has not made odious, wealth that intrigue has not blurred with its filthy stainings. These riches, God has ordained,

should pass from the hands of the wealthy to the hands of the poor.

We are living in the days of an un-Christian civilization. The rich are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer. The rich are more extravagant and live more luxuriously, and the squalor and misery of the poor are on a larger scale. The poor are growing in numbers and knitting these numbers into dangerous organizations. Now and then we hear them say strange things and ask stranger questions about the rights of property. These sayings and questions are impressed on their minds by teachers of an active propaganda carried on against faith, morality, and the inequality with which the riches of the world are in the possession of a few. We will always have the rich man, and we will always have poor Lazarus at his gate.

By the primary law of nature man appeared upon the earth as its natural inhabitant. All were constituted equal proprietors of its fruits, and equally authorized to partake of its plenty. But this common possession and equal enjoyment can never subsist among men in their fallen state, and will never be insisted upon except by the designing invaders of social order, who are often heard making a charge against God of unfairness and injustice in the distribution of the goods of the earth. "It is unjust of God," they say, "to lavish earthly treasures upon a few of His creatures while the masses hunger, and even some are reduced to squalid poverty." Well, you might as well charge an organ builder with

ignorance of his trade because he did not observe the same dimensions in the arrangement of the tubes when constructing the organ. Some of these tubes are large and others small, both emit different sounds according to their compass, but from this irregularity a harmony of sweet music is obtained which could not occur if all the tubes were of the same size. In like manner God willed that some men should be in affluent circumstances, others in poverty, in order that a marvelous harmony would be the result when the poor serve the rich, and the rich sustain the poor, and thus one by patience, the other by charity conjointly render glory to God. It is necessary that there should be a diversity of conditions, that there should be a regular gradation in society, that some should command and others obey, that some should experience the pangs of hunger and others enjoy the pomp of grandeur and opulence. Unwelcome as may be this inequality of conditions to the poor, it is here the Providence of God stands forward in their behalf distinct and visible with all its loving and benign features. It was becoming the goodness of God to extend His protection and support to all whom He called into existence. From the absolute dominion which He holds over all creatures He was free to provide for them according to His high will and pleasure, and His infinite wisdom has suggested a plan which human imbecility should not presume to arraign or oppose. The Lord God Omnipotent could by a thousand ways have provided for the distressed and extricated them from the rigors of chill penury,

but for reasons it is our duty to venerate, rather than criticize. He has been pleased to prescribe certain regulations in the distribution of temporal goods by imposing an obligation on those who possess them, of sharing the gifts of His bounty with those who possess them not. The goods of the world are not given to the rich exclusively for themselves, but as stewards of God they hold them for the purpose of balancing the order in society which He has made unequal. This is the social science of the Christian world, that the rich may minister to the poor the offices of brotherly love, and thus glorify the God of love and peace in a nobler way than would have been possible if there had been no poor and afflicted to call for compassion and relief.

In all countries an aristocracy of wealth, or talent, or title, has existed, and the duties of those who have been called to fill such a position, are clear and unequivocal. They are invited as stewards for the promotion of the spiritual and temporal happiness of those orders of the community to whom God has given less of opulence, leisure or ability. Just as we see in this city ladies forming themselves into committees and lending their powerful aid to schemes of piety, benevolence, and public usefulness, and thus become not only the ornament, but the solid support of the state. Where, however, privileges are misapplied, where wealth and power are employed not for the promotion of the glory of the Supreme Giver by those in affluence not adhering to the obligation imposed on them, but wasted in frivolous and often-

times irreligious pursuits, history inspired and uninspired alike concur to threaten a day of retribution.

The rich man who hordes up his wealth, is a parasite who feeds and pampers himself on the nutriment of the poor. For the Omnipotent Distributor of the goods of the earth has reserved certain rights, and these rights, sacred and inviolable He has transferred to the poor and needy. Those, therefore, who live in the comforts of life and swim in the luxuries of life, deceive themselves if they imagine that God has so placed them, and left their fellow-creatures in poverty and indigence by blind caprice to make one miserable and the other happy. God has placed in their hands a deposit which is the patrimony of the poor, in order that the poor can approach the rich with humility, and the rich descend to the poor with charity. And while placing the poor in the necessity of asking, He has put on the rich the obligation of giving. For we are called to be the cooperators of God's Providence, and the imitators of His divine bounty, in distributing the good which He accumulates in the hands of some for the benefit of many. They, therefore, deceive themselves if they imagine that the poor when asking alms, claim anything but what they have a right to; their superfluous goods appertain to them, they have a real and incontestable right to them which nature in her laws as well as the evangelical has ordained.

But the law which commands us to assist the poor is not alone founded upon the design of God as our

Creator, but also upon the law of the economy of the grace of God as our Redeemer. The age in which the rich glutton lived was not as progressive as the one we now live in. No one then thought of imprisoning the poor instead of sustaining them, in order their presence might not offend the over-sensitive tastes of the rich. The philanthropy of old had not discovered the remedy of despoiling the poor of their liberty as punishment for their misery. It was not customary then to issue severe orders to the servants not to allow those seeking alms to approach the doors of the lordly mansions, then they were not warned off as intruders; it is not necessary for me to remind you that to-day these are the orders given and carried out with rigor and severity. In fact the philanthropists of old were in complete ignorance of the means adopted by the rich to-day to guard against ever hearing the sighs and sobs of the afflicted, or seeing the tears of the distressed, in order that their rebuking conscience might not remind them of their duty, or human sympathy might urge them to part with some of their wealth to alleviate the hunger or pain of those in need. No, such was not the state of affairs then, for we see Lazarus was permitted to approach the door of the rich glutton, and no one sought to deprive him of that sad privilege by turning him away as he stood craving for a few crumbs. But, on the contrary, it appears that the wisdom of God so arranged that both should meet and see each other, and as Lazarus was poor and infirm in body had need of assistance from the rich man, much more was the rich man poor

and infirm in soul and had need of spiritual assistance from Lazarus. In the designs, therefore, of God, the emaciated and ulcerous body of Lazarus is ever before the eyes of the rich in order that he may receive assistance and live; and the rich are ever before the eyes of the poor, who in return of the aid received, by the charity received, assist the rich towards salvation. Behold, then, how the economy of the grace of God the Redeemer, places the poor represented by Lazarus under the eyes of the voluptuous rich, represented by the rich glutton of the Gospel, and see how God wished to show how the poor may find an asylum, a refuge, in the abundance and liberality of the rich, and the rich may find a means of sanctification and of salvation in their compassion and charity to the poor.

Unhappily corporally is the lot of the poor in their squalid misery, but more unhappily spiritually are the rich by reason of the corrosive fire of those passions inherent to their condition of life. These passions cannot be triumphed over without grace from God, but the voluptuary cannot receive this grace unless it enters by the door of charity. And I say with emphasis, in vain has the blood of the Redeemer been shed on Calvary for them, if the tears of the poor have been shed in vain in their presence.

What the rich are, therefore, in the order of nature, the poor are in the order of grace. The rich are for the poor the ministers of God the Provider, and the poor are for the rich the ministers of God the Sanctifier. As the rich hold in their hands the

food required by the poor for the nourishment of their bodies, in like manner do the poor hold in their hands the spiritual required by the rich for the nourishment of their souls. If the poor have need of the rich for their subsistence, much more are the rich in need of the poor for their eternal life.

The opulent, the wealthy, the voluptuary can never enter the gates of the kingdom of heaven unless they be introduced, be presented by the poor, who are the courtiers, the janitors, of the heavenly palace, the friends of the King. And as Jesus Christ said, "Make unto you friends of the Mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings." Noble friends of God are the poor, and if the rich have the great privilege of making them happy on earth by the virtue of their charity, they, the poor, will have a greater privilege in making the rich happy for all eternity.

Riches foment pride, sustain luxury, inspire a license to sin by fanning the human passions. These are the ordinary disorders of riches, and which exclude the rich from the kingdom of heaven, and plunge the rich glutton into hell; but if the rich be charitable, these disorders would not exist, grace would be victorious and would defend the rich from them, and arrest their rush to perdition, and direct them on the way to salvation. That which, therefore, allows the rich to live and die in their sins is their insensibility, their hardness of heart towards the poor; and this is the sin common to the rich and the principle of their eternal reprobation. From this you can see why the

Eternal Judge on the day of the general judgment, on the day of bitterness, the day of His wrath and vengeance, does not reproach the rich with any other crime but that of their omission to assist the poor, "I was hungry and you did not give me to eat."

The obligation on the part of the rich to assist the poor has a solemn sanction from the threats of our Eternal Judge, and fulfilled in the condemnation of the rich glutton, who when feasting on the luxuries of life refused a crumb that fell from his table to poor Lazarus shivering and starving at the gates of his palace. This rich glutton of the gospel was no infidel or idolater; he was not one of these great ones of the world who entertained and gave great banquets to glut sensual appetite and make them the occasion of obscene discourse and wanton dances, but a true adorer of God, a follower of the true religion, a son of Abraham, not alone by blood and race, but professed the same faith. He was not one of those whose accumulated wealth could be ascribed to the dishonest trafficking of the public funds, or the result of fraud or monopoly in commerce, or usury and extortion. He was not one of those whose accumulated wealth is very often amassed to the detriment of others by usurping their property. He was not one of those worldlings who utilize the affluent positions he is in to tyrannize over his inferiors and hold them in bondage and slavery by concocting intrigues and corrupting honesty. No! the gospel only charges him with dressing in purple and fine linen, and feasting sumptuously every day while poor Lazarus lay at his gates full of sores, crav-

ing for the crumbs that fell from his table; but none did he give him, and the dogs came and licked his sores; and it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels to heaven, to Abraham's bosom, and the rich man also died and was buried in hell.

This rich man of the gospel was one whom we in our days would characterize as a man of hospitable tendencies who lived sumptuously, who minds his own affairs and injures none. His faults were the faults of omission, he was blind to the responsibilities placed on him by God. Yet this man whom the world would lift up to heaven God hurls to hell. And why? Are riches a crime deserving such rigorous punishment? No, they are gifts of God, and in their use are not a crime but a blessing when used as decreed according to the law of the gospel of Jesus Christ; but the gospel says that the rich glutton had seen poor Lazarus many times at his gates, and he scowled at him, and turned away his face that he might not see poverty and hunger; he looked upon him as something unclean and not worthy of even a glance, much less a crumb. Behold, where the crime lies, and the true motive of his condemnation. He was damned not because he was rich, but because he was uncharitable; because he was not merciful. He was condemned not because he appropriated the properties of others by theft, but because he was not the just distributor of God's gifts. He was not condemned because he wounded poor Lazarus, but because he murdered him, by permitting him to die of hunger. If God has

blessed you with the plenty of this earth's treasures, it is that you may be the dispensers of His blessings; and the bestowing of alms becomes a duty strictly incumbent on you, and God requires at your hands a tribute according to the full extent of your ability.

We are living in days of little faith, small reason, and great sensuality. The rich ones of the world, eagerly engaged either in the hurry of business, or dancing in the whirl of pleasure, shrink from visiting those scenes where they could see neglected poverty undergoing the combined assault of hunger and disease; they have no time to attend to the whispered solicitation of half-concealed distress, which often feels a severe pang from the acceptance of an alms than from the distress itself. Little do the proud and haughty, the votaries of pleasure, and the slaves of ambition think of the complicated afflictions that weigh down the greatest portion of their fellow-creatures. Could they when seated at the festive board, in the hour of convivial enjoyment, could they see the sorrows of the miserable hovel, or of the dark cellar, seemingly destined for the villain and murderer rather than for the abode of innocence, they would receive a shock that must force them to dash the cup of pleasure from their lips, and aid in alleviating the sufferings of their fellow men. Could we transport them from their magnificent mansions, where luxury is pampered and pride swollen, to those baneful haunts of wretchedness and woe, to the damp corner where the forlorn sufferer lies overcome with sickness, destitute of all nourishment, or with such only as prolongs his

sufferings and his life. Could they see on the scattered straw a brood of helpless children perishing alike with cold and hunger; could they behold the speechless woe of the hapless mother, feeling at once the sorrows of a parent and a wife; could they see her matted hair, her disordered eye; could they contemplate the accumulated miseries of this mournful group and not dissolve into all the tenderness of commiseration. If they can see this and not melt, I say, that habitual dissipation must have steeled their souls to more than savage sensibility, and they are deprived of one of the noblest distinctions of human nature.

Away in the slums of a large overgrown city on a cold winter's night a woman was seen to issue from a dingy hovel, a woman who had seen better days but now was dashed against the rocks of this cold shelterless world. Three little children accompanied her; their little limbs that should be as fresh as the green leaves of life, were shriveled and crisped with poverty. "The air was biting shrewdly," as she journeyed along from street to street. An unwonted stillness reigned, the chattering teeth of her little ones broke that stillness; sobs now and then chopped the muttering words, "I am cold and hungry, Mother." She knocked at a door and asked for something to eat, but the door was slammed in her face, not even a reply was condescended. The little children wept bitterly and a silent tear stole down the furrowed cheeks of the starving mother. She passed along to another street and knocked again at another door. A servant came and hearing the suppliant and gentle voice

of the poor mother asking something for her hungry children to eat, went forth to acquaint her mistress that a poor woman very destitute looking was at the door seeking something to eat; after a little time she returned, but not with an alms in her hands, but on her lips cruel words, "The mistress says this is no hour of the night to be out." The door was closed and the mother and children directed their steps towards a lordly mansion where brilliant lights lit up its splendor. She knocked and after some delay the door was opened by the host himself bloated from a sumptuous banquet and besotted with the fumes of wine. "Well, what is the matter?" "Something, Sir, for my little children to eat; even the crumbs that fell from your table," sobbed the distressed mother. He pulled from his pocket a number of coins and seeing they were all gold, he said, while closing the door, "Come to-morrow." What tongue shall dare to tell us of the agony keen and deep that cut into the core as that mother looked down upon her darlings starving at her side and saw them reel and totter to the earth, and when lifted to her heart felt their little icy hands thrust into her bosom, cold as well. She clung with martyr's firmness to those where nature held a mother's heart; she gazed upon their death-like faces, their shrunken cheeks all pale and wan; she kissed them with her cold and famished lips, moaned into the frozen sky, and died.

"The cold winds swept the mountain's height,
And pathless was the dreary wild,
And mid the cheerless hours of night,
A mother wandered with her child;

As through the drifting snow she pressed,
  The babe was sleeping on her breast.

And colder still the winds did blow,
  And darker hours of night came on,
And deeper grew the drifting snow,
  Her limbs were chilled, her strength was gone.
'Oh, God!' she cried in accents wild,
  'If I must perish, save my child.'

She stripped her mantle from her breast,
  And bared her bosom to the storm,
And round the child she wrapped the vest,
  And smiled to think her babe was warm;
With one cold kiss, one tear she shed,
  And sank upon her snowy bed.

At dawn a traveler passed by,
  And saw her 'neath a snowy veil;
The frost of death was in her eye,
  Her cheek was cold, and hard, and pale.
He moved the robe from off the child,
  The babe looked up and sweetly smiled."

In the Acts of the Apostles we read that there lived in Joppe a certain woman named Tabitha, who was remarkable for good works and alms deeds. She died, and the disciples learning that St. Peter was in the neighboring town, called Lydda, sent two men to request him to hurry hither. St. Peter complied with the request, and having arrived went into the room where the remains lay. There lay Tabitha in the very sanctuary of death; a stole of flowers fell from her shoulders over her white garments; lilies were twined with the clustering ringlets of her hair, but their bloom only served to deepen the shadows

that overcast her countenance, so lately beaming with joy. Every lineament was now steeped in the noisome mildew of the grave. That fair form that moved silently among the poor was now as motionless as a Parian statue. Her eyes sunk in eternal night. Her lips were livid and conglutinated with the slime of dissolution. Around that couch absorbed in grief were many weeping widows and orphans, gazing on the figure of their great benefactrix, now lapsing with rapidity to decay; they wrung their hands and shook their heads in despair as they turned their streaming eyes towards St. Peter, as he entered. They showed him the garments which she made for them; they sung her good deeds of charity. The Apostle was moved, and elevating his eyes and hands towards heaven he knelt down and prayed. All was still and silent, not a move but the panting of hearts; he spoke to the body: "Tabitha, arise." And giving her his hand she rose from her couch, like an angel from her rest, and her voice broke out in fragrant and musical thanksgiving when she found herself restored to labor again among the poor.

Let us imagine a good Christian soul here who helps the poor, who gives the cup of cold water in the name of God, who clothes the famishing, who feeds the hungry, who visits the sick; imagine that soul after winging its way to the throne of the Eternal Judge, and there, dizzy with the beauty and brightness of heaven, it hears the voices of many of the poor and widowed who were the participators of its loving works of charity, like those around the bier of Ta-

bitha, plead before the throne of God: "Have mercy, O Lord, on this soul who acted in your name towards us on earth; we were hungry and he gave us to eat; we were thirsty and she gave us to drink; we were naked and they gave us garments to clothe us; we were sick and distressed and they visited us." Such unctuous prayers, such sweet accents must touch a responsive chord in the Sacred Heart of a just and merciful God.

THE END

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Messiah's Message, the
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